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DR. JOHNSON'S WORKS.

THE RAMBLER.

VOL. II.

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TALBOYS AND WHEELER, PRINTERS, OXFORD.

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THE

WORKS

OF

SAMUEL JOHNSON, LL.D.

IN NINE VOLUMES.

VOLUME THE THIRD.

OXFORD:

PUBLISHED BY TALBOYS AND WHEELER;

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THE

RAMBLER.

N°. 106. SATURDAY, MARCH 23, 1751.

Opinionum commenta delet dies, naturæ judicia confirmat. CICERO, vi. Att. I.
Time obliterates the fictions of opinion, and confirms the decision of nature.

IT is necessary to the success of flattery, that it be accommodated to particular circumstances or characters, and enter the heart on that side where the passions stand ready to receive it. A lady seldom listens with attention to any praise but that of her beauty; a merchant always expects to hear of his influence at the bank, his importance on the exchange, the height of his credit, and the extent of his traffick: and the author will scarcely be pleased without lamentations of the neglect of learning, the conspiracies against genius, and the slow progress of merit, or some praises of the magnanimity of those who encounter poverty and contempt in the cause of knowledge, and trust for the reward of their labours to the judgment and gratitude of posterity.

An assurance of unfading laurels, and immortal reputation, is the settled reciprocation of civility between amicable writers. To raise *monuments more durable than brass, and more conspicuous than pyramids*, has been long the common boast of literature; but, among the innumerable architects that erect columns to themselves, far the greater part, either for want of durable materials, or of art to dispose them, see their edifices perish as they are towering to completion, and those few that for awhile attract the eye

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of mankind, are generally weak in the foundation, and soon sink by the saps of time.

No place affords a more striking conviction of the vanity of human hopes, than a publick library; for who can see the wall crowded on every side by mighty volumes, the works of laborious meditation, and accurate inquiry, now scarcely known but by the catalogue, and preserved only to increase the pomp of learning, without considering how many hours have been wasted in vain endeavours, how often imagination has anticipated the praises of futurity, how many statues have risen to the eye of vanity, how many ideal converts have elevated zeal, how often wit has exulted in the eternal infamy of his antagonists, and dogmatism has delighted in the gradual advances of his authority, the immutability of his decrees, and the perpetuity of his power?

———————*Non unquam dedit*
Documenta fors majora, quam fragili loco
Starent superbi.
Insulting chance ne'er call'd with louder voice,
On swelling mortals to be proud no more.

Of the innumerable authors whose performances are thus treasured up in magnificent obscurity, most are forgotten, because they never deserved to be remembered, and owed the honours which they once obtained, not to judgment or to genius, to labour or to art, but to the prejudice of faction, the stratagem of intrigue, or the servility of adulation.

Nothing is more common than to find men whose works are now totally neglected, mentioned with praises by their contemporaries, as the oracles of their age, and the legislators of science. Curiosity is naturally excited, their volumes after long inquiry are found, but seldom reward the labour of the search. Every period of time has produced these bubbles of artificial fame, which are kept up awhile by the breath of fashion, and then break at once, and are annihilated. The learned often bewail the loss of ancient writers whose characters have survived their works; but,

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perhaps, if we could now retrieve them, we should find them only the Granvilles, Montagues, Stepneys, and Sheffields of their time, and wonder by what infatuation or caprice they could be raised to notice.

It cannot, however, be denied, that many have sunk into oblivion, whom it were unjust to number with this despicable class. Various kinds of literary fame seem destined to various measures of duration. Some spread into exuberance with a very speedy growth, but soon wither and decay; some rise more slowly, but last long. Parnassus has its flowers of transient fragrance, as well as its oaks of towering height, and its laurels of eternal verdure.

Among those whose reputation is exhausted in a short time by its own luxuriance, are the writers who take advantage of present incidents or characters, which strongly interest the passions, and engage universal attention. It is not difficult to obtain readers, when we discuss a question which every one is desirous to understand, which is debated in every assembly, and has divided the nation into parties; or when we display the faults or virtues of him, whose publick conduct has made almost every man his enemy or his friend. To the quick circulation of such productions all the motives of interest and vanity concur; the disputant enlarges his knowledge, the zealot animates his passion, and every man is desirous to inform himself concerning affairs so vehemently agitated, and variously represented.

It is scarcely to be imagined, through how many subordinations of interest the ardour of party is diffused; and what multitudes fancy themselves affected by every satire or panegyrick on a man of eminence. Whoever has, at any time, taken occasion to mention him with praise or blame, whoever happens to love or hate any of his adherents, as he wishes to confirm his opinion, and to strengthen his party, will diligently peruse every paper from which he can hope for sentiments like his own. An object, however small in itself, if placed near to the eye, will engross all the rays of light; and a transaction, however trivial, swells

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into importance when it presses immediately on our attention. He that shall peruse the political pamphlets of any past reign, will wonder why they were so eagerly read, or so loudly praised. Many of the performances, which had power to inflame factions, and fill a kingdom with confusion, have now very little effect upon a frigid critick; and the time is coming, when the compositions of later hirelings shall lie equally despised. In proportion as those who write on temporary subjects are exalted above their merit at first, they are afterwards depressed below it; nor can the brightest elegance of diction, or most artful subtilty of reasoning, hope for so much esteem from those whose regard is no longer quickened by curiosity or pride.

It is, indeed, the fate of controvertists, even when they contend for philosophical or theological truth, to be soon laid aside and slighted. Either the question is decided, and there is no more place for doubt and opposition; or mankind despair of understanding it, and grow weary of disturbance, content themselves with quiet ignorance, and refuse to be harassed with labours, which they have no hopes of recompensing with knowledge.

The authors of new discoveries may surely expect to be reckoned among those whose writings are secure of veneration: yet it often happens that the general reception of a doctrine obscures the books in which it was delivered. When any tenet is generally received and adopted as an incontrovertible principle, we seldom look back to the arguments upon which it was first established, or can bear that tediousness of deduction, and multiplicity of evidence, by which its author was forced to reconcile it to prejudice, and fortify it in the weakness of novelty against obstinacy and envy.

It is well known how much of our philosophy is derived from Boyle's discovery of the qualities of the air; yet of those who now adopt or enlarge his theory, very few have read the detail of his experiments. His name is, indeed, reverenced; but his works are neglected; we are contented to know, that he conquered his opponents, without

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inquiring what cavils were produced against him, or by what proofs they were confuted.

Some writers apply themselves to studies boundless and inexhaustible, as experiments in natural philosophy. These are always lost in successive compilations, as new advances are made, and former observations become more familiar. Others spend their lives in remarks on language, or explanations of antiquities, and only afford materials for lexicographers and commentators, who are themselves overwhelmed by subsequent collectors, that equally destroy the memory of their predecessors by amplification, transposition, or contraction. Every new system of nature gives birth to a swarm of expositors, whose business is to explain and illustrate it, and who can hope to exist no longer than the founder of their sect preserves his reputation.

There are, indeed, few kinds of composition from which an author, however learned or ingenious, can hope a long continuance of fame. He who has carefully studied human nature, and can well describe it, may with most reason flatter his ambition. Bacon, among all his pretensions to the regard of posterity, seems to have pleased himself chiefly with his essays, *which come home to men's business and bosoms*, and of which, therefore, he declares his expectation, that they *will live as long as books last*. It may, however, satisfy an honest and benevolent mind to have been useful, though less conspicuous; nor will he that extends his hope to higher rewards, be so much anxious to obtain praise, as to discharge the duty which providence assigns him.

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N°. 107. TUESDAY, MARCH 26, 1751.

Alternis igitur contendere versibus ambo
Cœpere: alternos Musæ meminisse volebant. VIRG. Ec. vii. 18.

On themes alternate now the swains recite;
The muses in alternate themes delight. ELPHINSTON.

AMONG the various censures, which the unavoidable comparison of my performances with those of my predecessors has produced, there is none more general than that of uniformity. Many of my readers remark the want of those changes of colours, which formerly fed the attention with unexhausted novelty, and of that intermixture of subjects, or alternation of manner, by which other writers relieved weariness, and awakened expectation.

I have, indeed, hitherto avoided the practice of uniting gay and solemn subjects in the same paper, because it seems absurd for an author to counteract himself, to press at once with equal force upon both parts of the intellectual balance, or give medicines, which, like the double poison of Dryden, destroy the force of one another. I have endeavoured sometimes to divert, and sometimes to elevate; but have imagined it an useless attempt to disturb merriment by solemnity, or interrupt seriousness by drollery. Yet I shall this day publish two letters of very different tendency, which I hope, like tragicomedy, may chance to please even when they are not critically approved.

TO THE RAMBLER.

DEAR SIR,

THOUGH, as my mamma tells me, I am too young to talk at the table, I have great pleasure in listening to the conversation of learned men, especially when they discourse of things which I do not understand; and have, therefore, been of late particularly delighted with many disputes about the *alteration of the style*, which, they say, is to be made by act of parliament.

One day when my mamma was gone out of the room,

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I asked a very great scholar what the style was. He told me he was afraid I should hardly understand him when he informed me, that it was the stated and established method of computing time. It was not, indeed, likely that I should understand him; for I never yet knew time computed in my life, nor can imagine why we should be at so much trouble to count what we cannot keep. He did not tell me whether we are to count the time past, or the time to come; but I have considered them both by myself, and think it as foolish to count time that is gone, as money that is spent; and as for the time which is to come, it only seems farther off by counting; and therefore, when any pleasure is promised me, I always think of the time as little as I can.

I have since listened very attentively to every one that talked upon this subject, of whom the greater part seem not to understand it better than myself; for though they often hint how much the nation has been mistaken, and rejoice that we are at last growing wiser than our ancestors, I have never been able to discover from them, that any body has died sooner, or been married later, for counting time wrong; and, therefore, I began to fancy that there was a great bustle with little consequence.

At last, two friends of my papa, Mr. Cycle, and Mr. Starlight, being, it seems, both of high learning, and able to make an almanack, began to talk about the new style. Sweet Mr. Starlight—I am sure I shall love his name as long as I live; for he told Cycle roundly, with a fierce look, that we should never be right without a *year of confusion*. Dear Mr. Rambler, did you ever hear any thing so charming? a whole year of confusion! When there has been a rout at mamma's, I have thought one night of confusion worth a thousand nights of rest; and if I can but see a year of confusion, a whole year, of cards in one room, and dancings in another, here a feast, and there a masquerade, and plays, and coaches, and hurries, and messages, and milliners, and raps at the door, and visits, and frolicks, and new fashions, I shall not care what they do with the

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rest of the time, nor whether they count it by the old style or the new; for I am resolved to break loose from the nursery in the tumult, and play my part among the rest; and it will be strange if I cannot get a husband and a chariot in the year of confusion.

Cycle, who is neither so young nor so handsome as Starlight, very gravely maintained, that all the perplexity may be avoided by leaping over eleven days in the reckoning; and, indeed, if it should come only to this, I think the new style is a delightful thing; for my mamma says I shall go to court when I am sixteen, and if they can but contrive often to leap over eleven days together, the months of restraint will soon be at an end. It is strange, that with all the plots that have been laid against time, they could never kill it by act of parliament before. Dear sir, if you have any vote or interest, get them but for once to destroy eleven months, and then I shall be as old as some married ladies. But this is desired only if you think they will not comply with Mr. Starlight's scheme; for nothing surely could please me like a year of confusion, when I shall no longer be fixed this hour to my pen, and the next to my needle, or wait at home for the dancing-master one day, and the next for the musick-master; but run from ball to ball, and from drum to drum; and spend all my time without tasks, and without account, and go out without telling whither, and come home without regard to prescribed hours, or family rules.

I am, sir,

Your humble servant,

PROPERANTIA.

MR. RAMBLER,

I WAS seized this morning with an unusual-pensiveness, and, finding that books only served to heighten it, took a ramble into the fields, in hopes of relief and invigoration from the keenness of the air and brightness of the sun.

As I wandered wrapped up in thought, my eyes were struck with the hospital for the reception of deserted infants, which I surveyed with pleasure, till, by a natural

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train of sentiment, I began to reflect on the fate of the mothers. For to what shelter can they fly? Only to the arms of their betrayer, which, perhaps, are now no longer open to receive them; and then how quick must be the transition from deluded virtue to shameless guilt, and from shameless guilt to hopeless wretchedness?

The anguish that I felt, left me no rest till I had, by your means, addressed myself to the publick on behalf of those forlorn creatures, the women of the town; whose misery here might satisfy the most rigorous censor, and whose participation of our common nature might surely induce us to endeavour, at least, their preservation from eternal punishment.

These were all once, if not virtuous, at least innocent; and might still have continued blameless and easy, but for the arts and insinuations of those whose rank, fortune, or education, furnished them with means to corrupt or to delude them. Let the libertine reflect a moment on the situation of that woman, who, being forsaken by her betrayer, is reduced to the necessity of turning prostitute for bread, and judge of the enormity of his guilt by the evils which it produces.

It cannot be doubted but that numbers follow this dreadful course of life, with shame, horrour, and regret; but where can they hope for refuge; "*The world is not their friend, nor the world's law.*" Their sighs, and tears, and groans, are criminal in the eye of their tyrants, the bully and the bawd, who fatten on their misery, and threaten them with want or a gaol, if they show the least design of escaping from their bondage.

"To wipe all tears from off all faces," is a task too hard for mortals; but to alleviate misfortunes is often within the most limited power: yet the opportunities which every day affords of relieving the most wretched of human beings are overlooked and neglected, with equal disregard of policy and goodness.

There are places, indeed, set apart, to which these unhappy creatures may resort, when the diseases of inconti-

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nence seize upon them; but if they obtain a cure, to what are they reduced? Either to return with the small remains of beauty to their former guilt, or perish in the streets with nakedness and hunger.

How frequently have the gay and thoughtless, in their evening frolicks, seen a band of those miserable females, covered with rags, shivering with cold, and pining with hunger; and, without either pitying their calamities, or reflecting upon the cruelty of those who, perhaps, first seduced them by caresses of fondness, or magnificence of promises, go on to reduce others to the same wretchedness by the same means!

To stop the increase of this deplorable multitude, is undoubtedly the first and most pressing consideration. To prevent evil is the great end of government, the end for which vigilance and severity are properly employed. But surely those whom passion or interest has already depraved, have some claim to compassion, from beings equally frail and fallible with themselves. Nor will they long groan in their present afflictions, if none were to refuse them relief, but those that owe their exemption from the same distress only to their wisdom and their virtue.

I am, &c.

AMICUS[a].

[a] The letter from Amicus was from an unknown correspondent. It breathes a tenderness of spirit worthy of Johnson himself. But he practised the lesson which it inculcates;—a harder task! Sterne could *write* sentiment.

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N°. 108. SATURDAY, MARCH 30, 1751.

———————*Sapere aude:*
Incipe. Vivendi recte qui prorogat horam,
Rusticus expectat dum defluat amnis; at ille
Labitur et labetur in omne volubilis ævum. HOR. Lib. i. Ep. ii. 39.

Begin, be bold, and venture to be wise;
He who defers his work from day to day,
Does on a river's bank expecting stay,
Till the whole stream, which stopp'd him, should be gone,
That runs, and as it runs, for ever will run on. COWLEY.

AN ancient poet, unreasonably discontented at the present state of things, which his system of opinions obliged him to represent in its worst form, has observed of the earth, "that its greater part is covered by the uninhabitable ocean; that of the rest some is encumbered with naked mountains, and some lost under barren sands; some scorched with unintermitted heat, and some petrified with perpetual frost; so that only a few regions remain for the production of fruits, the pasture of cattle, and the accommodation of man."

The same observation may be transferred to the time allotted us in our present state. When we have deducted all that is absorbed in sleep, all that is inevitably appropriated to the demands of nature, or irresistibly engrossed by the tyranny of custom; all that passes in regulating the superficial decorations of life, or is given up in the reciprocations of civility to the disposal of others; all that is torn from us by the violence of disease, or stolen imperceptibly away by lassitude and languor; we shall find that part of our duration very small of which we can truly call ourselves masters, or which we can spend wholly at our own choice. Many of our hours are lost in a rotation of petty cares, in a constant recurrence of the same employments; many of our provisions for ease or happiness are always exhausted by the present day; and a great part of our existence serves no other purpose, than that of enabling us to enjoy the rest.

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Of the few moments which are left in our disposal, it may reasonably be expected, that we should be so frugal, as to let none of them slip from us without some equivalent; and perhaps it might be found, that as the earth, however straightened by rocks and waters, is capable of producing more than all its inhabitants are able to consume, our lives, though much contracted by incidental distraction, would yet afford us a large space vacant to the exercise of reason and virtue; that we want not time, but diligence, for great performances; and that we squander much of our allowance, even while we think it sparing and insufficient.

This natural and necessary comminution of our lives, perhaps often makes us insensible of the negligence with which we suffer them to slide away. We never consider ourselves as possessed at once of time sufficient for any great design, and therefore indulge ourselves in fortuitous amusements. We think it unnecessary to take an account of a few supernumerary moments, which, however employed, could have produced little advantage, and which were exposed to a thousand chances of disturbance and interruption.

It is observable that, either by nature or by habit, our faculties are fitted to images of a certain extent, to which we adjust great things by division, and little things by accumulation. Of extensive surfaces we can only take a survey, as the parts succeed one another; and atoms we cannot perceive till they are united into masses. Thus we break the vast periods of time into centuries and years; and thus, if we would know the amount of moments, we must agglomerate them into days and weeks.

The proverbial oracles of our parsimonious ancestors have informed us, that the fatal waste of fortune is by small expenses, by the profusion of sums too little singly to alarm our caution, and which we never suffer ourselves to consider together. Of the same kind is the prodigality of life; he that hopes to look back hereafter with satisfaction upon past years, must learn to know the present

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value of single minutes and endeavour to let no particle of time fall useless to the ground.

It is usual for those who are advised to the attainment of any new qualification, to look upon themselves as required to change the general course of their conduct, to dismiss business, and exclude pleasure, and to devote their days and nights to a particular attention. But all common degrees of excellence are attainable at a lower price; he that should steadily and resolutely assign to any science or language those interstitial vacancies which intervene in the most crowded variety of diversion or employment, would find every day new irradiations of knowledge, and discover how much more is to be hoped from frequency and perseverance, than from violent efforts and sudden desires; efforts which are soon remitted when they encounter difficulty, and desires, which, if they are indulged too often, will shake off the authority of reason, and range capriciously from one object to another.

The disposition to defer every important design to a time of leisure, and a state of settled uniformity, proceeds generally from a false estimate of the human powers. If we except those gigantick and stupendous intelligencies who are said to grasp a system by intuition, and bound forward from one series of conclusions to another, without regular steps through intermediate propositions, the most successful students make their advances in knowledge by short flights, between each of which the mind may lie at rest. For every single act of progression a short time is sufficient; and it is only necessary, that whenever that time is afforded, it be well employed.

Few minds will be long confined to severe and laborious meditation; and when a successful attack on knowledge has been made, the student recreates himself with the contemplation of his conquest, and forbears another incursion, till the new-acquired truth has become familiar, and his curiosity calls upon him for fresh gratifications. Whether the time of intermission is spent in company, or in solitude, in necessary business, or in voluntary levities,

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the understanding is equally abstracted from the object of inquiry; but, perhaps, if it be detained by occupations less pleasing, it returns again to study with greater alacrity than when it is glutted with ideal pleasures, and surfeited with intemperance of application. He that will not suffer himself to be discouraged by fancied impossibilities, may sometimes find his abilities invigorated by the necessity of exerting them in short intervals, as the force of a current is increased by the contraction of its channel.

From some cause like this, it has probably proceeded, that among those who have contributed to the advancement of learning, many have risen to eminence in opposition to all the obstacles which external circumstances could place in their way, amidst the tumult of business, the distresses of poverty, or the dissipations of a wandering and unsettled state. A great part of the life of Erasmus was one continual peregrination; ill supplied with the gifts of fortune, and led from city to city, and from kingdom to kingdom, by the hopes of patrons and preferment, hopes which always flattered and always deceived him; he yet found means, by unshaken constancy, and a vigilant improvement of those hours, which, in the midst of the most restless activity, will remain unengaged, to write more than another in the same condition would have hoped to read. Compelled by want to attendance and solicitation, and so much versed in common life, that he has transmitted to us the most perfect delineation of the manners of his age, he joined to his knowledge of the world such application to books, that he will stand for ever in the first rank of literary heroes. How this proficiency was obtained he sufficiently discovers, by informing us, that the Praise of Folly, one of his most celebrated performances, was composed by him on the road to Italy; *ne totum illud tempus quo equo fuit insidendum, illiteratis fabulis terreretur:* "lest the hours which he was obliged to spend on horseback should be tattled away without regard to literature."

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An Italian philosopher expressed in his motto, that *time was his estate*; an estate, indeed, which will produce nothing without cultivation, but will always abundantly repay the labours of industry, and satisfy the most extensive desires, if no part of it be suffered to lie waste by negligence, to be overrun with noxious plants, or laid out for show, rather than for use.

N°. 109. TUESDAY, APRIL 2, 1751.

Gratum est, quod patriæ civem populoque dedisti,
Si facis, ut patriæ sit idoneus, utilis agris,
Utilis et bellorum et pacis rebus agendis.
Plurimum enim intererit, quibus artibus, et quibus hunc tu
Moribus instituas. JUV. Sat. xiv. 70.

Grateful the gift! a member to the state,
If you that member useful shall create;
Train'd both to war, and, when the war shall cease,
As fond, as fit t'improve the arts of peace.
For much it boots which way you train your boy,
The hopeful object of your future joy. ELPHINSTON.

TO THE RAMBLER.

SIR,

THOUGH you seem to have taken a view sufficiently extensive of the miseries of life, and have employed much of your speculation on mournful subjects, you have not yet exhausted the whole stock of human infelicity. There is still a species of wretchedness which escapes your observation, though it might supply you with many sage remarks, and salutary cautions.

I cannot but imagine the start of attention awakened by this welcome hint; and at this instant see the Rambler snuffing his candle, rubbing his spectacles, stirring his fire, locking out interruption, and settling himself in his easy chair, that he may enjoy a new calamity without disturbance. For, whether it be that continued sickness or misfortune has acquainted you only with the bitterness of being; or that you imagine none but yourself able to

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discover what I suppose has been seen and felt by all the inhabitants of the world; whether you intend your writings as antidotal to the levity and merriment with which your rivals endeavour to attract the favour of the publick; or fancy that you have some particular powers of dolorous declamation, and *warble out your groans* with uncommon elegance or energy; it is certain, that whatever be your subject, melancholy, for the most part, bursts in upon your speculation, your gaiety is quickly overcast, and though your readers may be flattered with hopes of pleasantry, they are seldom dismissed but with heavy hearts.

That I may, therefore, gratify you with an imitation of your own syllables of sadness, I will inform you that I was condemned, by some disastrous influence, to be an only son, born to the apparent prospect of a large fortune, and allotted to my parents at that time of life when satiety of common diversions allows the mind to indulge parental affection with greater intenseness. My birth was celebrated by the tenants with feasts, and dances, and bagpipes: congratulations were sent from every family within ten miles round; and my parents discovered in my first cries such tokens of future virtue and understanding, that they declared themselves determined to devote the remaining part of life to my happiness, and the increase of their estate.

The abilities of my father and mother were not perceptibly unequal, and education had given neither much advantage over the other. They had both kept good company, rattled in chariots, glittered in playhouses, and danced at court, and were both expert in the games that were in their time called in as auxiliaries against the intrusion of thought.

When there is such a parity between two persons associated for life, the dejection which the husband, if he be not completely stupid, must always suffer for want of superiority, sinks him to submissiveness. My mamma therefore governed the family without control; and except that

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my father still retained some authority in the stables, and, now and then, after a supernumerary bottle, broke a looking-glass or china dish to prove his sovereignty, the whole course of the year was regulated by her direction, the servants received from her all their orders, and the tenants were continued or dismissed at her discretion.

She, therefore, thought herself entitled to the superintendence of her son's education; and when my father, at the instigation of the parson, faintly proposed that I should be sent to school, very positively told him, that she should not suffer so fine a child to be ruined; that she never knew any boys at a grammar-school that could come into a room without blushing, or sit at table without some awkward uneasiness; that they were always putting themselves into danger by boisterous plays, or vitiating their behaviour with mean company, and that, for her part, she would rather follow me to the grave, than see me tear my clothes, and hang down my head, and sneak about with dirty shoes, and blotted fingers, my hair unpowdered, and my hat uncocked.

My father, who had no other end in his proposal than to appear wise and manly, soon acquiesced, since I was not to live by my learning; for, indeed, he had known very few students that had not some stiffness in their manner. They, therefore, agreed, that a domestick tutor should be procured, and hired an honest gentleman of mean conversation and narrow sentiments, but whom, having passed the common forms of literary education, they implicitly concluded qualified to teach all that was to be learned from a scholar. He thought himself sufficiently exalted by being placed at the same table with his pupil, and had no other view than to perpetuate his felicity by the utmost flexibility of submission to all my mother's opinions and caprices. He frequently took away my book, lest I should mope with too much application, charged me never to write without turning up my ruffles, and generally brushed my coat before he dismissed me into the parlour.

He had no occasion to complain of too burdensome an

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employment: for my mother very judiciously considered, that I was not likely to grow politer in his company, and suffered me not to pass any more time in his apartment than my lesson required. When I was summoned to my task, she enjoined me not to get any of my tutor's ways, who was seldom mentioned before me but for practices to be avoided. I was every moment admonished not to lean on my chair, cross my legs, or swing my hands like my tutor; and once my mother very seriously deliberated upon his total dismission, because I began, she said, to learn his manner of sticking on my hat, and had his bend in my shoulders, and his totter in my gait.

Such, however, was her care, that I escaped all these depravities; and when I was only twelve years old, had rid myself of every appearance of childish diffidence. I was celebrated round the country for the petulance of my remarks, and the quickness of my replies; and many a scholar, five years older than myself, have I dashed into confusion by the steadiness of my countenance, silenced by my readiness of repartee, and tortured with envy by the address with which I picked up a fan, presented a snuff-box, or received an empty tea-cup.

At fourteen I was completely skilled in all the niceties of dress, and I could not only enumerate all the variety of silks, and distinguish the product of a French loom, but dart my eye through a numerous company, and observe every deviation from the reigning mode. I was universally skilful in all the changes of expensive finery; but as every one, they say, has something to which he is particularly born, was eminently knowing in Brussels' lace.

The next year saw me advanced to the trust and power of adjusting the ceremonial of an assembly. All received their partners from my hand, and to me every stranger applied for introduction. My heart now disdained the instructions of a tutor, who was rewarded with a small annuity for life, and left me qualified, in my own opinion, to govern myself.

In a short time I came to London, and as my father

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was well known among the higher classes of life, soon obtained admission to the most splendid assemblies, and most crowded card-tables. Here I found myself universally caressed and applauded; the ladies praised the fancy of my clothes, the beauty of my form, and the softness of my voice; endeavoured, in every place, to force themselves to my notice; and invited, by a thousand oblique solicitations, my attendance to the playhouse, and my salutations in the park. I was now happy to the utmost extent of my conception; I passed every morning in dress, every afternoon in visits, and every night in some select assemblies, where neither care nor knowledge were suffered to molest us.

After a few years, however, these delights became familiar, and I had leisure to look round me with more attention. I then found that my flatterers had very little power to relieve the languor of satiety, or recreate weariness, by varied amusement; and therefore endeavoured to enlarge the sphere of my pleasures, and to try what satisfaction might be found in the society of men. I will not deny the mortification with which I perceived, that every man whose name I had heard mentioned with respect, received me with a kind of tenderness, nearly bordering on compassion; and that those whose reputation was not well established, thought it necessary to justify their understandings, by treating me with contempt. One of these witlings elevated his crest, by asking me in a full coffee-house the price of patches; and another whispered that he wondered why miss Frisk did not keep me that afternoon to watch her squirrel.

When I found myself thus hunted from all masculine conversation by those who were themselves barely admitted, I returned to the ladies, and resolved to dedicate my life to their service and their pleasure. But I find that I have now lost my charms. Of those with whom I entered the gay world, some are married, some have retired, and some have so much changed their opinion, that they scarcely pay any regard to my civilities, if there is any other man in the place. The new flight of beauties to whom I have made

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my addresses, suffer me to pay the treat, and then titter with boys. So that I now find myself welcome only to a few grave ladies, who, unacquainted with all that gives either use or dignity to life, are content to pass their hours between their bed and their cards, without esteem from the old, or reverence from the young.

I cannot but think, Mr. Rambler, that I have reason to complain; for surely the females ought to pay some regard to the age of him whose youth was passed in endeavours to please them. They that encourage folly in the boy, have no right to punish it in the man. Yet I find that, though they lavish their first fondness upon pertness and gaiety, they soon transfer their regard to other qualities, and ungratefully abandon their adorers to dream out their last years in stupidity and contempt.

I am, &c.

FLORENTULUS.

N°. 110. SATURDAY, APRIL 6, 1751.

At nobis vitæ dominum quærentibus unum
Lux iter est, et clara dies, et gratia simplex.
Spem sequimur, gradimurque fide, fruimurque futuris,
Ad quæ non veniunt præsentis gaudia vitæ,
Nec currunt pariter capta, et capienda voluptas.

PRUDENTIUS, Cont. Sym. ii. 904.

We through this maze of life one Lord obey;
Whose light and grace unerring lead the way.
By hope and faith secure of future bliss,
Gladly the joys of present life we miss:
For baffled mortals still attempt in vain,
Present and future bliss at once to gain. F. LEWIS.

THAT to please the Lord and Father of the universe, is the supreme interest of created and dependent beings, as it is easily proved, has been universally confessed; and since all rational agents are conscious of having neglected or violated the duties prescribed to them, the fear of being rejected, or punished by God, has always burdened the human mind. The expiation of crimes, and renovation of

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the forfeited hopes of divine favour, therefore constitute a large part of every religion.

The various methods of propitiation and atonement which fear and folly have dictated, or artifice and interest tolerated in the different parts of the world, however they may sometimes reproach or degrade humanity, at least show the general consent of all ages and nations in their opinion of the placability of the divine nature. That God will forgive, may, indeed, be established as the first and fundamental truth of religion; for, though the knowledge of his existence is the origin of philosophy, yet, without the belief of his mercy, it would have little influence upon our moral conduct. There could be no prospect of enjoying the protection or regard of him, whom the least deviation from rectitude made inexorable for ever; and every man would naturally withdraw his thoughts from the contemplation of a creator, whom he must consider as a governor too pure to be pleased, and too severe to be pacified; as an enemy infinitely wise, and infinitely powerful, whom he could neither deceive, escape, nor resist.

Where there is no hope, there can be no endeavour. A constant and unfailing obedience is above the reach of terrestrial diligence; and, therefore, the progress of life could only have been the natural descent of negligent despair from crime to crime, had not the universal persuasion of forgiveness, to be obtained by proper means of reconciliation, recalled those to the paths of virtue, whom their passions had solicited aside; and animated to new attempts, and firmer perseverance, those whom difficulty had discouraged, or negligence surprised.

In times and regions so disjoined from each other, that there can scarcely be imagined any communication of sentiments either by commerce or tradition, has prevailed a general and uniform expectation of propitiating God by corporeal austerities, of anticipating his vengeance by voluntary inflictions, and appeasing his justice by a speedy and cheerful submission to a less penalty, when a greater is incurred.

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Incorporated minds will always feel some inclination towards exterior acts and ritual observances. Ideas not represented by sensible objects are fleeting, variable, and evanescent. We are not able to judge of the degree of conviction which operated at any particular time upon our own thoughts, but as it is recorded by some certain and definite effect. He that reviews his life in order to determine the probability of his acceptance with God, if he could once establish the necessary proportion between crimes and sufferings, might securely rest upon his performance of the expiation; but while safety remains the reward only of mental purity, he is always afraid lest he should decide too soon in his own favour; lest he should not have felt the pangs of true contrition; lest he should mistake satiety for detestation, or imagine that his passions are subdued when they are only sleeping.

From this natural and reasonable diffidence arose, in humble and timorous piety, a disposition to confound penance with repentance, to repose on human determinations, and to receive from some judicial sentence the stated and regular assignment of reconciliatory pain. We are never willing to be without resource: we seek in the knowledge of others a succour for our own ignorance, and are ready to trust any that will undertake to direct us when we have no confidence in ourselves.

This desire to ascertain, by some outward marks, the state of the soul, and this willingness to calm the conscience by some settled method, have produced, as they are diversified in their effects by various tempers and principles, most of the disquisitions and rules, the doubts and solutions, that have embarrassed the doctrine of repentance, and perplexed tender and flexible minds with innumerable scruples concerning the necessary measures of sorrow, and adequate degrees of self-abhorrence; and these rules, corrupted by fraud, or debased by credulity, have, by the common resiliency of the mind from one extreme to another, incited others to an open contempt of

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all subsidiary ordinances, all prudential caution, and the whole discipline of regulated piety.

Repentance, however difficult to be practised, is, if it be explained without superstition, easily understood. *Repentance is the relinquishment of any practice, from the conviction that it has offended God.* Sorrow, and fear, and anxiety, are properly not parts, but adjuncts of repentance; yet they are too closely connected with it to be easily separated; for they not only mark its sincerity, but promote its efficacy.

No man commits any act of negligence or obstinacy, by which his safety or happiness in this world is endangered, without feeling the pungency of remorse. He who is fully convinced, that he suffers by his own failure, can never forbear to trace back his miscarriage to its first cause, to image to himself a contrary behaviour, and to form involuntary resolutions against the like fault, even when he knows that he shall never again have the power of committing it. Danger, considered as imminent, naturally produces such trepidations of impatience as leave all human means of safety behind them; he that has once caught an alarm of terrour, is every moment seized with useless anxieties, adding one security to another, trembling with sudden doubts, and distracted by the perpetual occurrence of new expedients. If, therefore, he whose crimes have deprived him of the favour of God, can reflect upon his conduct without disturbance, or can at will banish the reflection; if he who considers himself as suspended over the abyss of eternal perdition only by the thread of life, which must soon part by its own weakness, and which the wing of every minute may divide, can cast his eyes round him without shuddering with horrour, or panting with security; what can he judge of himself, but that he is not yet awakened to sufficient conviction, since every loss is more lamented than the loss of the divine favour, and every danger more dreadful than the danger of final condemnation?

Retirement from the cares and pleasures of the world

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has been often recommended as useful to repentance. This at least is evident, that every one retires, whenever ratiocination and recollection are required on other occasions; and surely the retrospect of life, the disentanglement of actions complicated with innumerable circumstances, and diffused in various relations, the discovery of the primary movements of the heart, and the extirpation of lusts and appetites deeply rooted and widely spread, may be allowed to demand some secession from sport and noise, business and folly. Some suspension of common affairs, some pause of temporal pain and pleasure, is doubtless necessary to him that deliberates for eternity, who is forming the only plan in which miscarriage cannot be repaired, and examining the only question in which mistake cannot be rectified.

Austerities and mortifications are means by which the mind is invigorated and roused, by which the attractions of pleasure are interrupted, and the chains of sensuality are broken. It is observed by one of the fathers, that *he who restrains himself in the use of things lawful, will never encroach upon things forbidden.* Abstinence, if nothing more, is, at least, a cautious retreat from the utmost verge of permission, and confers that security which cannot be reasonably hoped by him that dares always to hover over the precipice of destruction, or delights to approach the pleasures which he knows it fatal to partake. Austerity is the proper antidote to indulgence; the diseases of mind as well as body are cured by contraries, and to contraries we should readily have recourse, if we dreaded guilt as we dread pain.

The completion and sum of repentance is a change of life. That sorrow which dictates no caution, that fear which does not quicken our escape, that austerity which fails to rectify our affections, are vain and unavailing. But sorrow and terrour must naturally precede reformation; for what other cause can produce it? He, therefore, that feels himself alarmed by his conscience, anxious for the attainment of a better state, and afflicted by the memory

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of his past faults, may justly conclude, that the great work of repentance is begun, and hope by retirement and prayer, the natural and religious means of strengthening his conviction, to impress upon his mind such a sense of the divine presence, as may overpower the blandishments of secular delights, and enable him to advance from one degree of holiness to another, till death shall set him free from doubt and contest, misery and temptation[b].

> What better can we do than prostrate fall
> Before him reverent; and there confess
> Humbly our faults, and pardon beg; with tears
> Wat'ring the ground, and with our sighs the air
> Frequenting, sent from hearts contrite, in sign
> Of sorrow unfeign'd, and humiliation meek? Par. Lost, B. x. 1087.

N°. 111. TUESDAY, APRIL 9, 1751.

Φρονεῖν γὰρ οἱ ταχεῖς, οὐκ ἀσφαλεῖς. SOPHOC.

Disaster always waits on early wit.

IT has been observed by long experience, that late springs produce the greatest plenty. The delay of blooms and fragrance, of verdure and breezes, is, for the most part, liberally recompensed by the exuberance and fecundity of the ensuing seasons; the blossoms which lie concealed till the year is advanced, and the sun is high, escape those chilling blasts, and nocturnal frosts, which are often fatal to early luxuriance, prey upon the first smiles of vernal beauty, destroy the feeble principles of vegetable life, intercept the fruit in the germ, and beat down the flowers unopened to the ground.

I am afraid there is little hope of persuading the young and sprightly part of my readers, upon whom the spring

[b] The perusal of these profound remarks on penance and repentance had so powerful an effect on one of the English Benedictine monks (the Rev. James Compton) at Paris, as to lead him from the errours of popery! For an account of Dr. Johnson's true benevolence through the whole of this interesting occasion, see Malone's note to Boswell's Life of Johnson, vol. iv. p. 210—edit. 1822.

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naturally forces my attention, to learn, from the great process of nature, the difference between diligence and hurry, between speed and precipitation; to prosecute their designs with calmness, to watch the concurrence of opportunity, and endeavour to find the lucky moment which they cannot make. Youth is the time of enterprise and hope: having yet no occasion of comparing our force with any opposing power, we naturally form presumptions in our own favour, and imagine that obstruction and impediment will give way before us. The first repulses rather inflame vehemence than teach prudence; a brave and generous mind is long before it suspects its own weakness, or submits to sap the difficulties which it expected to subdue by storm. Before disappointments have enforced the dictates of philosophy, we believe it in our power to shorten the interval between the first cause and the last effect; we laugh at the timorous delays of plodding industry, and fancy that, by increasing the fire, we can at pleasure accelerate the projection.

At our entrance into the world, when health and vigour give us fair promises of time sufficient for the regular maturation of our schemes, and a long enjoyment of our acquisitions, we are eager to seize the present moment; we pluck every gratification within our reach, without suffering it to ripen into perfection, and crowd all the varieties of delight into a narrow compass; but age seldom fails to change our conduct; we grow negligent of time in proportion as we have less remaining, and suffer the last part of life to steal from us in languid preparations for future undertakings, or slow approaches to remote advantages, in weak hopes of some fortuitous occurrence, or drowsy equilibrations of undetermined counsel: whether it be that the aged, having tasted the pleasures of man's condition, and found them delusive, become less anxious for their attainment; or that frequent miscarriages have depressed them to despair, and frozen them to inactivity; or that death shocks them more as it advances upon them, and they are afraid to remind themselves of their decay, or to discover to their own hearts that the time of trifling is past.

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A perpetual conflict with natural desires seems to be the lot of our present state. In youth we require something of the tardiness and frigidity of age; and in age we must labour to recall the fire and impetuosity of youth: in youth we must learn to expect, and in age to enjoy.

The torment of expectation is, indeed, not easily to be borne at a time when every idea of gratification fires the blood, and flashes on the fancy; when the heart is vacant to every fresh form of delight, and has no rival engagements to withdraw it from the importunities of a new desire. Yet, since the fear of missing what we seek must always be proportionable to the happiness expected from possessing it, the passions, even in this tempestuous state, might be somewhat moderated by frequent inculcation of the mischief of temerity, and the hazard of losing that which we endeavour to seize before our time.

He that too early aspires to honours, must resolve to encounter not only the opposition of interest, but the malignity of envy. He that is too eager to be rich, generally endangers his fortune in wild adventures, and uncertain projects; and he that hastens too speedily to reputation, often raises his character by artifices and fallacies, decks himself in colours which quickly fade, or in plumes which accident may shake off, or competition pluck away.

The danger of early eminence has been extended by some, even to the gifts of nature; and an opinion has been long conceived, that quickness of invention, accuracy of judgment, or extent of knowledge, appearing before the usual time, presage a short life. Even those who are less inclined to form general conclusions, from instances which by their own nature must be rare, have yet been inclined to prognosticate no suitable progress from the first sallies of rapid wits; but have observed, that after a short effort they either loiter or faint, and suffer themselves to be surpassed by the even and regular perseverance of slower understandings.

It frequently happens, that applause abates diligence. Whoever finds himself to have performed more than was

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demanded, will be contented to spare the labour of unnecessary performances, and sit down to enjoy at ease his superfluities of honour. He, whom success has made confident of his abilities, quickly claims the privilege of negligence, and looks contemptuously on the gradual advances of a rival, whom he imagines himself able to leave behind whenever he shall again summon his force to the contest. But long intervals of pleasure dissipate attention, and weaken constancy; nor is it easy for him that has sunk from diligence into sloth, to rouse out of his lethargy, to recollect his notions, rekindle his curiosity, and engage with his former ardour in the toils of study.

Even that friendship which intends the reward of genius, too often tends to obstruct it. The pleasure of being caressed, distinguished, and admired, easily seduces the student from literary solitude. He is ready to follow the call which summons him to hear his own praise, and which, perhaps, at once flatters his appetite with certainty of pleasures, and his ambition with hopes of patronage; pleasures which he conceives inexhaustible, and hopes which he has not yet learned to distrust.

These evils, indeed, are by no means to be imputed to nature, or considered as inseparable from an early display of uncommon abilities. They may be certainly escaped by prudence and resolution, and must therefore be recounted rather as consolations to those who are less liberally endowed, than as discouragements to such as are born with uncommon qualities. Beauty is well known to draw after it the persecutions of impertinence, to incite the artifices of envy, and to raise the flames of unlawful love; yet, among the ladies whom prudence or modesty have made most eminent, who has ever complained of the inconveniencies of an amiable form? or would have purchased safety by the loss of charms?

Neither grace of person, nor vigour of understanding, are to be regarded otherwise than as blessings, as means of happiness indulged by the supreme benefactor; but the advantages of either may be lost by too much eagerness to

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obtain them. A thousand beauties in their first blossom, by an imprudent exposure to the open world, have suddenly withered at the blast of infamy; and men who might have subjected new regions to the empire of learning, have been lured by the praise of their first productions from academical retirement, and wasted their days in vice and dependence. The virgin who too soon aspires to celebrity and conquest, perishes by childish vanity, ignorant credulity, or guiltless indiscretion. The genius who catches at laurels and preferment before his time, mocks the hopes that he had excited, and loses those years which might have been most usefully employed, the years of youth, of spirit, and vivacity.

It is one of the innumerable absurdities of pride, that we are never more impatient of direction, than in that part of life when we need it most; we are in haste to meet enemies whom we have not strength to overcome, and to undertake tasks which we cannot perform: and as he that once miscarries does not easily persuade mankind to favour another attempt, an ineffectual struggle for fame is often followed by perpetual obscurity.

N°. 112. SATURDAY, APRIL 13, 1751.

In mea vesanas habui dispendia vires,
Et valui pœnam fortis in ipse meam. OVID. Am. Lib. i. vii. 25.
Of strength pernicious to myself I boast;
The pow'rs I have were given me to my cost. F. LEWIS.

WE are taught by Celsus, that health is best preserved by avoiding settled habits of life, and deviating sometimes into slight aberrations from the laws of medicine; by varying the proportions of food and exercise, interrupting the successions of rest and labour, and mingling hardships with indulgence. The body, long accustomed to stated quantities and uniform periods, is disordered by the smallest irregularity; and since we cannot adjust every day by the balance or barometer, it is fit sometimes to depart from rigid accuracy, that we may be able to comply

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with necessary affairs, or strong inclinations. He that too long observes nice punctualities, condemns himself to voluntary imbecility, and will not long escape the miseries of disease.

The same laxity of regimen is equally necessary to intellectual health, and to a perpetual susceptibility of occasional pleasure. Long confinement to the same company which, perhaps, similitude of taste brought first together, quickly contracts the faculties, and makes a thousand things offensive that are in themselves indifferent; a man accustomed to hear only the echo of his own sentiments, soon bars all the common avenues of delight, and has no part in the general gratifications of mankind.

In things which are not immediately subject to religious or moral consideration, it is dangerous to be too long or too rigidly in the right. Sensibility may, by an incessant attention to elegance and propriety, be quickened to a tenderness inconsistent with the condition of humanity, irritable by the smallest asperity, and vulnerable by the gentlest touch. He that pleases himself too much with minute exactness and submits to endure nothing in accommodations, attendance, or address, below the point of perfection, will, whenever he enters the crowd of life, be harassed with innumerable distresses, from which those who have not in the same manner increased their sensations find no disturbance. His exotick softness will shrink at the coarseness of vulgar felicity, like a plant transplanted to northern nurseries, from the dews and sunshine of the tropical regions.

There will always be a wide interval between practical and ideal excellence; and, therefore, if we allow not ourselves to be satisfied while we can perceive any errour or defect, we must refer our hopes of ease to some other period of existence. It is well known, that, exposed to a microscope, the smoothest polish of the most solid bodies discovers cavities and prominences; and that the softest bloom of roseate virginity repels the eye with excrescences and discolorations. The perceptions as well as the senses may be improved to our own disquiet, and we may, by di-

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ligent cultivation of the powers of dislike, raise, in time, an artificial fastidiousness, which shall fill the imagination with phantoms of turpitude, show us the naked skeleton of every delight, and present us only with the pains of pleasure, and the deformities of beauty.

Peevishness, indeed, would, perhaps, very little disturb the peace of mankind, were it always the consequence of superfluous delicacy; for it is the privilege only of deep reflection, or lively fancy, to destroy happiness by art and refinement. But, by continual indulgence of a particular humour, or by long enjoyment of undisputed superiority, the dull and thoughtless may likewise acquire the power of tormenting themselves and others, and become sufficiently ridiculous or hateful to those who are within sight of their conduct, or reach of their influence.

They that have grown old in a single state are generally found to be morose, fretful, and captious; tenacious of their own practices and maxims; soon offended by contradiction or negligence; and impatient of any association, but with those that will watch their nod, and submit themselves to unlimited authority. Such is the effect of having lived without the necessity of consulting any inclination but their own.

The irascibility of this class of tyrants is generally exerted upon petty provocations, such as are incident to understandings not far extended beyond the instincts of animal life; but, unhappily, he that fixes his attention on things always before him, will never have long cessations of anger. There are many veterans of luxury upon whom every noon brings a paroxysm of violence, fury, and execration; they never sit down to their dinner without finding the meat so injudiciously bought, or so unskilfully dressed, such blunders in the seasoning, or such improprieties in the sauce, as can scarcely be expiated without blood; and, in the transports of resentment, make very little distinction between guilt and innocence, but let fly their menaces, or growl out their discontent, upon all whom fortune exposes to the storm.

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It is not easy to imagine a more unhappy condition than that of dependence on a peevish man. In every other state of inferiority the certainty of pleasing is perpetually increased by a fuller knowledge of our duty; and kindness and confidence are strengthened by every new act of trust, and proof of fidelity. But peevishness sacrifices to a momentary offence the obsequiousness or usefulness of half a life, and, as more is performed, increases her exactions.

Chrysalus gained a fortune by trade, and retired into the country; and, having a brother burdened by the number of his children, adopted one of his sons. The boy was dismissed with many prudent admonitions; informed of his father's inability to maintain him in his native rank; cautioned against all opposition to the opinions or precepts of his uncle; and animated to perseverance by the hopes of supporting the honour of the family, and overtopping his elder brother. He had a natural ductility of mind, without much warmth of affection, or elevation of sentiment; and, therefore, readily complied with every variety of caprice; patiently endured contradictory reproofs; heard false accusations without pain, and opprobrious reproaches without reply; laughed obstreperously at the ninetieth repetition of a joke; asked questions about the universal decay of trade; admired the strength of those heads by which the price of stocks is changed and adjusted; and behaved with such prudence and circumspection, that, after six years, the will was made, and Juvenculus was declared heir. But, unhappily, a month afterwards, retiring at night from his uncle's chamber, he left the door open behind him: the old man tore his will, and, being then perceptibly declining, for want of time to deliberate, left his money to a trading company.

When female minds are imbittered by age or solitude, their malignity is generally exerted in a rigorous and spiteful superintendence of domestick trifles. Eriphile has employed her eloquence for twenty years upon the degeneracy of servants, the nastiness of her house, the ruin of her furniture, the difficulty of preserving tapestry from the moths,

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and the carelessness of the sluts whom she employs in brushing it. It is her business every morning to visit all the rooms, in hopes of finding a chair without its cover, a window shut or open contrary to her orders, a spot on the hearth, or a feather on the floor, that the rest of the day may be justifiably spent in taunts of contempt, and vociferations of anger. She lives for no other purpose but to preserve the neatness of a house and gardens, and feels neither inclination to pleasure, nor aspiration after virtue, while she is engrossed by the great employment of keeping gravel from grass, and wainscot from dust. Of three amiable nieces she has declared herself an irreconcilable enemy: to one, because she broke off a tulip with her hoop; to another, because she spilt her coffee on a Turkey carpet; and to the third, because she let a wet dog run into the parlour. She has broken off her intercourse of visits, because company makes a house dirty; and resolves to confine herself more to her own affairs, and to live no longer in mire by foolish lenity.

Peevishness is generally the vice of narrow minds, and, except when it is the effect of anguish and disease, by which the resolution is broken, and the mind made too feeble to bear the lightest addition to its miseries, proceeds from an unreasonable persuasion of the importance of trifles. The proper remedy against it is, to consider the dignity of human nature, and the folly of suffering perturbation and uneasiness from causes unworthy of our notice.

He that resigns his peace to little casualties, and suffers the course of his life to be interrupted by fortuitous inadvertencies, or offences, delivers up himself to the direction of the wind, and loses all that constancy and equanimity which constitute the chief praise of a wise man.

The province of prudence lies between the greatest things and the least; some surpass our power by their magnitude, and some escape our notice by their number and their frequency. But the indispensable business of life will afford sufficient exercise to every understanding;

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and such is the limitation of the human powers, that, by attention to trifles, we must let things of importance pass unobserved: when we examine a mite with a glass, we see nothing but a mite.

That it is every man's interest to be pleased, will need little proof: that it is his interest to please others, experience will inform him. It is, therefore, not less necessary to happiness than to virtue, that he rid his mind of passions, which make him uneasy to himself, and hateful to the world; which enchain his intellects, and obstruct his improvement.

N°. 113. TUESDAY, APRIL 16, 1751.

———'*Uxorem, Posthume, ducis?*
Dic qua Tisiphone, quibus exagitare colubris? Juv. Sat. vi. 28.
A sober man like thee to change his life!
What fury would possess thee with a wife? Dryden.

TO THE RAMBLER.

SIR,

I know not whether it is always a proof of innocence to treat censure with contempt. We owe so much reverence to the wisdom of mankind, as justly to wish, that our own opinion of our merit may be ratified by the concurrence of other suffrages; and since guilt and infamy must have the same effect upon intelligences unable to pierce beyond external appearance, and influenced often rather by example than precept, we are obliged to refute a false charge, lest we should countenance the crime which we have never committed. To turn away from an accusation with supercilious silence, is equally in the power of him that is hardened by villany, and inspirited by innocence. The wall of brass which Horace erects upon a clear conscience, may be sometimes raised by impudence or power; and we should always wish to preserve the dignity of virtue, by adorning her with graces which wickedness cannot assume.

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For this reason, I have determined no longer to endure, with either patient or sullen resignation, a reproach, which is, at least in my opinion, unjust; but will lay my case honestly before you, that you or your readers may at length decide it.

Whether you will be able to preserve your boasted impartiality, when you hear that I am considered as an adversary by half the female world, you may surely pardon me for doubting, notwithstanding the veneration to which you may imagine yourself entitled by your age, your learning, your abstraction, or your virtue. Beauty, Mr. Rambler, has often overpowered the resolutions of the firm, and the reasonings of the wise, roused the old to sensibility, and subdued the rigorous to softness.

I am one of those unhappy beings, who have been marked out as husbands for many different women, and deliberated a hundred times on the brink of matrimony. I have discussed all the nuptial preliminaries so often, that I can repeat the forms in which jointures are settled, pinmoney secured, and provisions for younger children ascertained; but am at last doomed, by general consent, to everlasting solitude, and excluded by an irreversible decree from all hopes of connubial felicity. I am pointed out by every mother, as a man whose visits cannot be admitted without reproach; who raises hopes only to imbitter disappointment, and makes offers only to seduce girls into a waste of that part of life, in which they might gain advantageous matches, and become mistresses and mothers.

I hope you will think, that some part of this penal severity may justly be remitted, when I inform you, that I never yet professed love to a woman without sincere intentions of marriage; that I have never continued an appearance of intimacy from the hour that my inclination changed, but to preserve her whom I was leaving from the shock of abruptness, or the ignominy of contempt; that I always endeavoured to give the ladies an opportunity of seeming to discard me; and that I never forsook a mistress for larger fortune, or brighter beauty, but because I disco-

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vered some irregularity in her conduct, or some depravity in her mind; not because I was charmed by another, but because I was offended by herself.

I was very early tired of that succession of amusements by which the thoughts of most young men are dissipated, and had not long glittered in the splendour of an ample patrimony before I wished for the calm of domestick happiness. Youth is naturally delighted with sprightliness and ardour, and therefore I breathed out the sighs of my first affection at the feet of the gay, the sparkling, the vivacious Ferocula. I fancied to myself a perpetual source of happiness in wit never exhausted, and spirit never depressed; looked with veneration on her readiness of expedients, contempt of difficulty, assurance of address, and promptitude of reply; considered her as exempt by some prerogative of nature from the weakness and timidity of female minds; and congratulated myself upon a companion superiour to all common troubles and embarrassments. I was, indeed, somewhat disturbed by the unshaken perseverance with which she enforced her demands of an unreasonable settlement; yet I should have consented to pass my life in union with her, had not my curiosity led me to a crowd gathered in the street, where I found Ferocula, in the presence of hundreds, disputing for sixpence with a chairman. I saw her in so little need of assistance, that it was no breach of the laws of chivalry to forbear interposition, and I spared myself the shame of owning her acquaintance. I forgot some point of ceremony at our next interview, and soon provoked her to forbid me her presence.

My next attempt was upon a lady of great eminence for learning and philosophy. I had frequently observed the barrenness and uniformity of connubial conversation, and therefore thought highly of my own prudence and discernment, when I selected from a multitude of wealthy beauties, the deep-read Misothea, who declared herself the inexorable enemy of ignorant pertness, and puerile levity; and scarcely condescended to make tea, but for the linguist, the geometrician, the astronomer, or the poet. The queen

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of the Amazons was only to be gained by the hero who could conquer her in single combat; and Misothea's heart was only to bless the scholar who could overpower her by disputation. Amidst the fondest transports of courtship she could call for a definition of terms, and treated every argument with contempt that could not be reduced to regular syllogism. You may easily imagine, that I wished this courtship at an end; but when I desired her to shorten my torments, and fix the day of my felicity, we were led into a long conversation, in which Misothea endeavoured to demonstrate the folly of attributing choice and self-direction to any human being. It was not difficult to discover the danger of committing myself for ever to the arms of one who might, at any time, mistake the dictates of passion, or the calls of appetite, for the decree of fate; or consider cuckoldom as necessary to the general system, as a link in the everlasting chain of successive causes. I therefore told her, that destiny had ordained us to part, and that nothing should have torn me from her but the talons of necessity.

I then solicited the regard of the calm, the prudent, the economical Sophronia, a lady who considered wit as dangerous, and learning as superfluous, and thought that the woman who kept her house clean, and her accounts exact, took receipts for every payment, and could find them at a sudden call, inquired nicely after the condition of the tenants, read the price of stocks once a week, and purchased every thing at the best market, could want no accomplishments necessary to the happiness of a wise man. She discoursed with great solemnity on the care and vigilance which the superintendence of a family demands; observed how many were ruined by confidence in servants; and told me, that she never expected honesty but from a strong chest, and that the best store-keeper was the mistress's eye. Many such oracles of generosity she uttered, and made every day new improvements in her schemes for the regulation of her servants, and the distribution of her time. I was convinced that, whatever I might suffer from

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Sophronia, I should escape poverty; and we therefore proceeded to adjust the settlements according to her own rule, *fair and softly*. But one morning her maid came to me in tears to intreat my interest for a reconciliation with her mistress, who had turned her out at night for breaking six teeth in a tortoise-shell comb; she had attended her lady from a distant province, and having not lived long enough to save much money, was destitute among strangers, and, though of a good family, in danger of perishing in the streets, or of being compelled by hunger to prostitution. I made no scruple of promising to restore her; but upon my first application to Sophronia, was answered with an air which called for approbation, that if she neglected her own affairs, I might suspect her of neglecting mine; that the comb stood her in three half crowns; that no servant should wrong her twice; and that, indeed, she took the first opportunity of parting with Phillida, because, though she was honest, her constitution was bad, and she thought her very likely to fall sick. Of our conference I need not tell you the effect; it surely may be forgiven me, if, on this occasion, I forgot the decency of common forms.

From two more ladies I was disengaged by finding, that they entertained my rivals at the same time, and determined their choice by the liberality of our settlements. Another I thought myself justified in forsaking, because she gave my attorney a bribe to favour her in the bargain; another because I could never soften her to tenderness, till she heard that most of my family had died young; and another, because, to increase her fortune by expectations, she represented her sister as languishing and consumptive.

I shall in another letter give the remaining part of my history of courtship. I presume that I should hitherto have injured the majesty of female virtue, had I not hoped to transfer my affection to higher merit.

I am, &c.

HYMENÆUS.

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N°. 114. SATURDAY, APRIL 20, 1751.

———*Audi,*
Nulla unquam de morte hominis cunctatio longa est. Juv. Sat. vi. 219.

———When man's life is in debate,
The judge can ne'er too long deliberate. Dryden.

Power and superiority are so flattering and delightful, that, fraught with temptation, and exposed to danger, as they are, scarcely any virtue is so cautious, or any prudence so timorous, as to decline them. Even those that have most reverence for the laws of right, are pleased with showing that not fear, but choice, regulates their behaviour; and would be thought to comply, rather than obey. We love to overlook the boundaries which we do not wish to pass; and, as the Roman satirist remarks, he that has no design to take the life of another, is yet glad to have it in his hands.

From the same principle, tending yet more to degeneracy and corruption, proceeds the desire of investing lawful authority with terrour, and governing by force rather than persuasion. Pride is unwilling to believe the necessity of assigning any other reason than her own will; and would rather maintain the most equitable claims by violence and penalties, than descend from the dignity of command to dispute and expostulation.

It may, I think, be suspected, that this political arrogance has sometimes found its way into legislative assemblies, and mingled with deliberations upon property and life. A slight perusal of the laws by which the measures of vindictive and coercive justice are established, will discover so many disproportions between crimes and punishments, such capricious distinctions of guilt, and such confusion of remissness and severity, as can scarcely be believed to have been produced by publick wisdom, sincerely and calmly studious of publick happiness.

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The learned, the judicious, the pious Boerhaave relates, that he never saw a criminal dragged to execution without asking himself, "Who knows whether this man is not less culpable than me?" On the days when the prisons of this city are emptied into the grave, let every spectator of the dreadful procession put the same question to his own heart. Few among those that crowd in thousands to the legal massacre, and look with carelessness, perhaps with triumph, on the utmost exacerbations of human misery, would then be able to return without horrour and dejection. For, who can congratulate himself upon a life passed without some act more mischievous to the peace or prosperity of others, than the theft of a piece of money?

It has been always the practice, when any particular species of robbery becomes prevalent and common, to endeavour its suppression by capital denunciations. Thus one generation of malefactors is commonly cut off, and their successors are frighted into new expedients; the art of thievery is augmented with greater variety of fraud, and subtilized to higher degrees of dexterity, and more occult methods of conveyance. The law then renews the pursuit in the heat of anger, and overtakes the offender again with death. By this practice capital inflictions are multiplied, and crimes, very different in their degrees of enormity, are equally subjected to the severest punishment that man has the power of exercising upon man.

The lawgiver is undoubtedly allowed to estimate the malignity of an offence, not merely by the loss or pain which single acts may produce, but by the general alarm and anxiety arising from the fear of mischief, and insecurity of possession: he therefore exercises the right which societies are supposed to have over the lives of those that compose them, not simply to punish a transgression, but to maintain order, and preserve quiet; he enforces those laws with severity, that are most in danger of violation, as the commander of a garrison doubles the guard on that side which is threatened by the enemy.

This method has been long tried, but tried with so little

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success, that rapine and violence are hourly increasing, yet few seem willing to despair of its efficacy; and of those who employ their speculations upon the present corruption of the people, some propose the introduction of more horrid, lingering, and terrifick punishments; some are inclined to accelerate the executions; some to discourage pardons; and all seem to think that lenity has given confidence to wickedness, and that we can only be rescued from the talons of robbery by inflexible rigour, and sanguinary justice.

Yet, since the right of setting an uncertain and arbitrary value upon life has been disputed, and since experience of past times gives us little reason to hope that any reformation will be effected by a periodical havock of our fellow-beings, perhaps it will not be useless to consider what consequences might arise from relaxations of the law, and a more rational and equitable adaptation of penalties to offences.

Death is, as one of the ancients observes, τὸ τῶν φοβερῶν φοβερώτατον, *of dreadful things the most dreadful:* an evil, beyond which nothing can be threatened by sublunary power, or feared from human enmity or vengeance. This terrour should, therefore, be reserved as the last resort of authority, as the strongest and most operative of prohibitory sanctions, and placed before the treasure of life, to guard from invasion what cannot be restored. To equal robbery with murder is to reduce murder to robbery; to confound in common minds the gradations of iniquity, and incite the commission of a greater crime to prevent the detection of a less. If only murder were punished with death, very few robbers would stain their hands in blood; but when, by the last act of cruelty, no new danger is incurred, and greater security may be obtained, upon what principle shall we bid them forbear?

It may be urged, that the sentence is often mitigated to simple robbery; but surely this is to confess that our laws are unreasonable in our own opinion; and, indeed, it may be observed, that all but murderers have, at their

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last hour, the common sensations of mankind pleading in their favour.

From this conviction of the inequality of the punishment to the offence, proceeds the frequent solicitation of pardons. They who would rejoice at the correction of a thief, are yet shocked at the thought of destroying him. His crime shrinks to nothing, compared with his misery; and severity defeats itself by exciting pity.

The gibbet, indeed, certainly disables those who die upon it from infesting the community; but their death seems not to contribute more to the reformation of their associates, than any other method of separation. A thief seldom passes much of his time in recollection or anticipation, but from robbery hastens to riot, and from riot to robbery; nor, when the grave closes upon his companion, has any other care than to find another.

The frequency of capital punishments, therefore, rarely hinders the commission of a crime, but naturally and commonly prevents its detection, and is, if we proceed only upon prudential principles, chiefly for that reason to be avoided. Whatever may be urged by casuists or politicians, the greater part of mankind, as they can never think that to pick the pocket and to pierce the heart is equally criminal, will scarcely believe that two malefactors so different in guilt can be justly doomed to the same punishment: nor is the necessity of submitting the conscience to human laws so plainly evinced, so clearly stated, or so generally allowed, but that the pious, the tender, and the just, will always scruple to concur with the community in an act which their private judgment cannot approve.

He who knows not how often rigorous laws produce total impunity, and how many crimes are concealed and forgotten for fear of hurrying the offender to that state in which there is no repentance, has conversed very little with mankind. And whatever epithets of reproach or contempt this compassion may incur from those who confound cruelty with firmness, I know not whether any wise man would wish it less powerful, or less extensive.

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If those whom the wisdom of our laws has condemned to die, had been detected in their rudiments of robbery, they might, by proper discipline and useful labour, have been disentangled from their habits, they might have escaped all the temptation to subsequent crimes, and passed their days in reparation and penitence; and detected they might all have been, had the prosecutors been certain that their lives would have been spared. I believe every thief will confess that he has been more than once seized and dismissed; and that he has sometimes ventured upon capital crimes, because he knew, that those whom he injured would rather connive at his escape, than cloud their minds with the horrours of his death.

All laws against wickedness are ineffectual, unless some will inform, and some will prosecute; but till we mitigate the penalties for mere violations of property, information will always be hated, and prosecution dreaded. The heart of a good man cannot but recoil at the thought of punishing a slight injury with death; especially when he remembers that the thief might have procured safety by another crime, from which he was restrained only by his remaining virtue.

The obligations to assist the exercise of publick justice are indeed strong; but they will certainly be overpowered by tenderness for life. What is punished with severity contrary to our ideas of adequate retribution, will be seldom discovered; and multitudes will be suffered to advance from crime to crime, till they deserve death, because, if they had been sooner prosecuted, they would have suffered death before they deserved it.

This scheme of invigorating the laws by relaxation, and extirpating wickedness by lenity, is so remote from common practice, that I might reasonably fear to expose it to the publick, could it be supported only by my own observations: I shall, therefore, by ascribing it to its author, Sir Thomas More, endeavour to procure it that attention,

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which I wish always paid to prudence, to justice, and to mercy [c].

N°. 115. TUESDAY, APRIL 23, 1751.

Quædam parva quidem, sed non toleranda maritis. Juv. Sat. vi. 183.

Some faults, though small, intolerable grow. Dryden.

TO THE RAMBLER.

SIR,

I SIT down, in pursuance of my late engagement, to recount the remaining part of the adventures that befell me in my long quest of conjugal felicity, which, though I have not yet been so happy as to obtain it, I have at least endeavoured to deserve by unwearied diligence, without suffering from repeated disappointments any abatement of my hope, or repression of my activity.

You must have observed in the world a species of mortals who employ themselves in promoting matrimony, and without any visible motive of interest or vanity, without any discoverable impulse of malice or benevolence, without any reason, but that they want objects of attention and topicks of conversation, are incessantly busy in procuring wives and husbands. They fill the ears of every single man and woman with some convenient match; and when they are informed of your age and fortune, offer a partner for life with the same readiness, and the same indifference, as a salesman, when he has taken measure by his eye, fits his customer with a coat.

It might be expected that they should soon be discouraged from this officious interposition by resentment or

[c] The arguments of the revered sir Samuel Romilly on criminal law, have almost been anticipated in this luminous paper, which would have gained praise even for a legislator. On the correction of our English criminal code, see Mr. Buxton's speech in the house of commons, 1820. It is a fund of practical information, and, apart from its own merits, will repay perusal by the valuable collection of opinions which it contains on this momentous and interesting subject. Ed.

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contempt; and that every man should determine the choice on which so much of his happiness must depend, by his own judgment and observation: yet it happens, that as these proposals are generally made with a show of kindness, they seldom provoke anger, but are, at worst, heard with patience, and forgotten. They influence weak minds to approbation; for many are sure to find in a new acquaintance, whatever qualities report has taught them to expect; and in more powerful and active understandings they excite curiosity, and sometimes, by a lucky chance, bring persons of similar tempers within the attraction of each other.

I was known to possess a fortune, and to want a wife; and, therefore, was frequently attended by these hymeneal solicitors, with whose importunity I was sometimes diverted, and sometimes perplexed; for they contended for me as vultures for a carcass; each employing all his eloquence, and all his artifices, to enforce and promote his own scheme, from the success of which he was to receive no other advantage than the pleasure of defeating others equally eager, and equally industrious.

An invitation to sup with one of those busy friends, made me, by a concerted chance, acquainted with Camilla, by whom it was expected that I should be suddenly and irresistibly enslaved. The lady, whom the same kindness had brought without her own concurrence into the lists of love, seemed to think me at least worthy of the honour of captivity: and exerted the power, both of her eyes and wit, with so much art and spirit, that though I had been too often deceived by appearances to devote myself irrevocably at the first interview, yet I could not suppress some raptures of admiration, and flutters of desire. I was easily persuaded to make nearer approaches; but soon discovered, that an union with Camilla was not much to be wished. Camilla professed a boundless contempt for the folly, levity, ignorance, and impertinence of her own sex; and very frequently expressed her wonder that men of learning or experience could submit to trifle away life with beings incapable of solid thought. In mixed

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companies, she always associated with the men, and declared her satisfaction when the ladies retired. If any short excursion into the country was proposed, she commonly insisted upon the exclusion of women from the party; because, where they were admitted, the time was wasted in frothy compliments, weak indulgences, and idle ceremonies. To show the greatness of her mind, she avoided all compliance with the fashion; and to boast the profundity of her knowledge, mistook the various textures of silk, confounded tabbies with damasks, and sent for ribands by wrong names. She despised the commerce of stated visits, a farce of empty form without instruction; and congratulated herself, that she never learned to write message cards. She often applauded the noble sentiment of Plato, who rejoiced that he was born a man rather than a woman; proclaimed her approbation of Swift's opinion, that women are only a higher species of monkeys; and confessed, that when she considered the behaviour, or heard the conversation, of her sex, she could not but forgive the Turks for suspecting them to want souls.

It was the joy and pride of Camilla to have provoked, by this insolence, all the rage of hatred, and all the persecutions of calumny; nor was she ever more elevated with her own superiority, than when she talked of female anger, and female cunning. Well, says she, has nature provided that such virulence should be disabled by folly, and such cruelty be restrained by impotence.

Camilla, doubtless, expected, that what she lost on one side, she should gain on the other; and imagined that every male heart would be open to a lady, who made such generous advances to the borders of virility. But man, ungrateful man, instead of springing forward to meet her, shrunk back at her approach. She was persecuted by the ladies as a deserter, and, at best, received by the men only as a fugitive. I, for my part, amused myself awhile with her fopperies, but novelty soon gave way to detestation, for nothing out of the common order of nature can be long borne. I had no inclination to a wife who had the rugged-

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ness of a man without his force, and the ignorance of a woman without her softness; nor could I think my quiet and honour to be intrusted to such audacious virtue as was hourly courting danger, and soliciting assault.

My next mistress was Nitella, a lady of gentle mien, and soft voice, always speaking to approve, and ready to receive direction from those with whom chance had brought her into company. In Nitella I promised myself an easy friend, with whom I might loiter away the day without disturbance or altercation. I therefore soon resolved to address her, but was discouraged from prosecuting my courtship, by observing, that her apartments were superstitiously regular; and that, unless she had notice of my visit, she was never to be seen. There is a kind of anxious cleanliness which I have always noted as the characteristick of a slattern; it is the superfluous scrupulosity of guilt, dreading discovery, and shunning suspicion: it is the violence of an effort against habit, which, being impelled by external motives, cannot stop at the middle point.

Nitella was always tricked out rather with nicety than elegance; and seldom could forbear to discover, by her uneasiness and constraint, that her attention was burdened, and her imagination engrossed: I therefore concluded, that being only occasionally and ambitiously dressed, she was not familiarized to her own ornaments. There are so many competitors for the fame of cleanliness, that it is not hard to gain information of those that fail, from those that desire to excel: I quickly found that Nitella passed her time between finery and dirt; and was always in a wrapper, night-cap, and slippers, when she was not decorated for immediate show.

I was then led by my evil destiny to Charybdis, who never neglected an opportunity of seizing a new prey when it came within her reach. I thought myself quickly made happy by permission to attend her to publick places; and pleased my own vanity with imagining the envy which I should raise in a thousand hearts, by appearing as the acknowledged favourite of Charybdis. She soon after hinted

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her intention to take a ramble for a fortnight, into a part of the kingdom which she had never seen. I solicited the happiness of accompanying her, which after a short reluctance, was indulged me. She had no other curiosity on her journey, than after all possible means of expense; and was every moment taking occasion to mention some delicacy, which I knew it my duty upon such notices to procure.

After our return, being now more familiar, she told me, whenever we met, of some new diversion; at night she had notice of a charming company that would breakfast in the gardens; and in the morning had been informed of some new song in the opera, some new dress at the playhouse, or some performer at a concert whom she longed to hear. Her intelligence was such, that there never was a show, to which she did not summon me on the second day; and as she hated a crowd, and could not go alone, I was obliged to attend at some intermediate hour, and pay the price of a whole company. When we passed the streets, she was often charmed with some trinket in the toyshops; and from moderate desires of seals and snuffboxes, rose, by degrees, to gold and diamonds. I now began to find the smile of Charybdis too costly for a private purse, and added one more to six and forty lovers, whose fortune and patience her rapacity had exhausted.

Imperia then took possession of my affections; but kept them only for a short time. She had newly inherited a large fortune, and having spent the early part of her life in the perusal of romances, brought with her into the gay world all the pride of Cleopatra; expected nothing less than vows, altars, and sacrifices; and thought her charms dishonoured, and her power infringed, by the softest opposition to her sentiments, or the smallest transgression of her commands. Time might, indeed, cure this species of pride in a mind not naturally undiscerning, and vitiated only by false representations; but the operations of time are slow; and I, therefore, left her to grow wise at leisure, or to continue in errour at her own expense.

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Thus I have hitherto, in spite of myself, passed my life in frozen celibacy. My friends, indeed, often tell me, that I flatter my imagination with higher hopes than human nature can gratify; that I dress up an ideal charmer in all the radiance of perfection, and then enter the world to look for the same excellence in corporeal beauty. But surely, Mr. Rambler, it is not madness to hope for some terrestrial lady unstained by the spots which I have been describing; at least I am resolved to pursue my search; for I am so far from thinking meanly of marriage, that I believe it able to afford the highest happiness decreed to our present state; and if, after all these miscarriages, I find a woman that fills up my expectation, you shall hear once more from,

Yours, &c.

HYMENÆUS.

N°. 116. SATURDAY, APRIL 27, 1751.

Optat ephippia bos piger: optat arare caballus. HOR. Lib. i. Ep. xiv. 43.

Thus the slow ox would gaudy trappings claim;
The sprightly horse would plough.——— FRANCIS.

TO THE RAMBLER.

SIR,

I WAS the second son of a country gentleman by the daughter of a wealthy citizen of London. My father having by his marriage freed the estate from a heavy mortgage, and paid his sisters their portions, thought himself discharged from all obligation to further thought, and entitled to spend the rest of his life in rural pleasures. He therefore spared nothing that might contribute to the completion of his felicity; he procured the best guns and horses that the kingdom could supply, paid large salaries to his groom and huntsman, and became the envy of the country for the discipline of his hounds. But, above all his other attainments, he was eminent for a breed of pointers and setting-dogs, which, by long and vigilant culti-

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vation, he had so much improved, that not a partridge or heathcock could rest in security, and game of whatever species that dared to light upon his manor, was beaten down by his shot, or covered with his nets.

My elder brother was very early initiated in the chase, and, at an age when other boys are *creeping like snails unwillingly to school*, he could wind the horn, beat the bushes, bound over hedges, and swim rivers. When the huntsman one day broke his leg, he supplied his place with equal abilities, and came home with the scut in his hat, amidst the acclamations of the whole village. I, being either delicate or timorous, less desirous of honour, or less capable of sylvan heroism, was always the favourite of my mother; because I kept my coat clean, and my complexion free from freckles, and did not come home, like my brother, mired and tanned, nor carry corn in my hat to the horse, nor bring dirty curs into the parlour.

My mother had not been taught to amuse herself with books, and being much inclined to despise the ignorance and barbarity of the country ladies, disdained to learn their sentiments or conversation, and had made no addition to the notions which she had brought from the precincts of Cornhill. She was, therefore, always recounting the glories of the city; enumerating the succession of mayors; celebrating the magnificence of the banquets at Guildhall; and relating the civilities paid her at the companies' feasts by men of whom some are now made aldermen, some have fined for sheriffs, and none are worth less than forty thousand pounds. She frequently displayed her father's greatness; told of the large bills which he had paid at sight; of the sums for which his word would pass upon the Exchange; the heaps of gold which he used on Saturday night to toss about with a shovel; the extent of his warehouse, and the strength of his doors; and when she relaxed her imagination with lower subjects, described the furniture of their country-house, or repeated the wit of the clerks and porters.

By these narratives I was fired with the splendour and

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dignity of London, and of trade. I, therefore, devoted myself to a shop, and warmed my imagination from year to year with inquiries about the privileges of a freeman, the power of the common council, the dignity of a wholesale dealer, and the grandeur of mayoralty, to which my mother assured me that many had arrived who began the world with less than myself.

I was very impatient to enter into a path, which led to such honour and felicity; but was forced, for a time, to endure some repression of my eagerness, for it was my grandfather's maxim, that a *young man seldom makes much money, who is out of his time before two-and-twenty.* They thought it necessary, therefore, to keep me at home till the proper age, without any other employment than that of learning merchants' accounts, and the art of regulating books; but at length the tedious days elapsed, I was transplanted to town, and, with great satisfaction to myself, bound to a haberdasher.

My master, who had no conception of any virtue, merit, or dignity, but that of being rich, had all the good qualities which naturally arise from a close and unwearied attention to the main chance; his desire to gain wealth was so well tempered by the vanity of showing it, that, without any other principle of action, he lived in the esteem of the whole commercial world; and was always treated with respect by the only men whose good opinion he valued or solicited, those who were universally allowed to be richer than himself.

By his instructions I learned, in a few weeks, to handle a yard with great dexterity, to wind tape neatly upon the ends of my fingers, and to make up parcels with exact frugality of paper and packthread; and soon caught from my fellow-apprentices the true grace of a counter-bow, the careless air with which a small pair of scales is to be held between the fingers, and the vigour and sprightliness with which the box, after the riband has been cut, is returned into its place. Having no desire of any higher employment, and, therefore, applying all my powers to the

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knowledge of my trade, I was quickly master of all that could be known, became a critick in small wares, contrived new variations of figures, and new mixtures of colours, and was sometimes consulted by the weavers when they projected fashions for the ensuing spring.

With all these accomplishments, in the fourth year of my apprenticeship, I paid a visit to my friends in the country, where I expected to be received as a new ornament of the family, and consulted by the neighbouring gentlemen as a master of pecuniary knowledge, and by the ladies as an oracle of the mode. But, unhappily, at the first publick table to which I was invited, appeared a student of the temple, and an officer of the guards, who looked upon me with a smile of contempt, which destroyed at once all my hopes of distinction, so that I durst hardly raise my eyes for fear of encountering their superiority of mien. Nor was my courage revived by any opportunities of displaying my knowledge; for the templar entertained the company for part of the day with historical narratives and political observations; and the colonel afterwards detailed the adventures of a birthnight, told the claims and expectations of the courtiers, and gave an account of assemblies, gardens, and diversions. I, indeed, essayed to fill up a pause in a parliamentary debate with a faint mention of trade and Spaniards; and once attempted, with some warmth, to correct a gross mistake about a silver breast-knot: but neither of my antagonists seemed to think a reply necessary; they resumed their discourse without emotion, and again engrossed the attention of the company; nor did one of the ladies appear desirous to know my opinion of her dress, or to hear how long the carnation shot with white, that was then new amongst them, had been antiquated in town.

As I knew that neither of these gentlemen had more money than myself, I could not discover what had depressed me in their presence; nor why they were considered by others as more worthy of attention and respect; and, therefore, resolved, when we met again, to rouse my

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spirit, and force myself into notice. I went very early to the next weekly meeting, and was entertaining a small circle very successfully with a minute representation of my lord mayor's show, when the colonel entered, careless and gay, sat down with a kind of unceremonious civility, and, without appearing to intend any interruption, drew my audience away to the other part of the room, to which I had not the courage to follow them. Soon after came in the lawyer, not, indeed, with the same attraction of mien, but with greater powers of language: and by one or other the company was so happily amused, that I was neither heard nor seen, nor was able to give any other proof of my existence, than that I put round the glass, and was in my turn permitted to name the toast.

My mother, indeed, endeavoured to comfort me in my vexation, by telling me, that perhaps these showy talkers were hardly able to pay every one his own; that he who has money in his pocket need not care what any man says of him; that, if I minded my trade, the time will come when lawyers and soldiers would be glad to borrow out of my purse; and that it is fine, when a man can set his hands to his sides, and say he is worth forty thousand pounds every day of the year. These and many more such consolations and encouragements I received from my good mother, which, however, did not much allay my uneasiness; for, having by some accident heard that the country ladies despised her as a cit, I had, therefore, no longer much reverence for her opinions, but considered her as one whose ignorance and prejudice had hurried me, though without ill intentions, into a state of meanness and ignominy, from which I could not find any possibility of rising to the rank which my ancestors had always held.

I returned, however, to my master, and busied myself among thread, and silks, and laces, but without my former cheerfulness and alacrity. I had now no longer any felicity in contemplating the exact disposition of my powdered curls, the equal plaits of my ruffles, or the glossy blackness of my shoes; nor heard, with my former elevation, those

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compliments which ladies sometimes condescended to pay me upon my readiness in twisting a paper, or counting out the change. The term of Young Man, with which I was sometimes honoured, as I carried a parcel to the door of a coach, tortured my imagination; I grew negligent of my person, and sullen in my temper; often mistook the demands of the customers, treated their caprices and objections with contempt, and received and dismissed them with surly silence.

My master was afraid lest the shop should suffer by this change of my behaviour; and, therefore, after some expostulations, posted me in the warehouse, and preserved me from the danger and reproach of desertion, to which my discontent would certainly have urged me, had I continued any longer behind the counter.

In the sixth year of my servitude, my brother died of drunken joy, for having run down a fox that had baffled all the packs in the province. I was now heir, and, with the hearty consent of my master, commenced gentleman. The adventures in which my new character engaged me shall be communicated in another letter, by, sir,

Yours, &c.

MISOCAPELUS.

N°. 117. TUESDAY, APRIL 30, 1751.

Ὄσσαν ἐπ' Οὐλύμπῳ μέμασαν θέμεν, αὐτὰρ ἐπ' Ὄσσῃ
Πήλιον εἰνοσίφυλλον, ἵν' οὐρανὸς ἀμβατὸς εἴη. HOM. Od. A. 314.

The gods they challenge, and affect the skies:
Heav'd on Olympus tott'ring Ossa stood;
On Ossa, Pelion nods with all his wood. POPE.

TO THE RAMBLER.

SIR,

NOTHING has more retarded the advancement of learning than the disposition of vulgar minds to ridicule and vilify what they cannot comprehend. All industry must be excited by hope; and as the student often proposes no other reward to himself than praise, he is easily

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discouraged by contempt and insult. He who brings with him into a clamorous multitude the timidity of recluse speculation, and has never hardened his front in publick life, or accustomed his passions to the vicissitudes and accidents, the triumphs and defeats of mixed conversation, will blush at the stare of petulant incredulity, and suffer himself to be driven, by a burst of laughter, from the fortresses of demonstration. The mechanist will be afraid to assert, before hardy contradiction, the possibility of tearing down bulwarks with a silkworm's thread; and the astronomer, of relating the rapidity of light, the distance of the fixed stars, and the height of the lunar mountains.

If I could by any efforts have shaken off this cowardice, I had not sheltered myself under a borrowed name, nor applied to you for the means of communicating to the publick the theory of a garret; a subject, which, except some slight and transient strictures, has been hitherto neglected by those who were best qualified to adorn it, either for want of leisure to prosecute the various researches in which a nice discussion must engage them, or because it requires such diversity of knowledge, and such extent of curiosity, as is scarcely to be found in any single intellect: or, perhaps, others foresaw the tumults which would be raised against them, and confined their knowledge to their own breasts, and abandoned prejudice and folly to the direction of chance.

That the professors of literature generally reside in the highest stories, has been immemorially observed. The wisdom of the ancients was well acquainted with the intellectual advantages of an elevated situation: why else were the Muses stationed on Olympus or Parnassus, by those who could, with equal right, have raised them bowers in the vale of Tempe, or erected their altars among the flexures of Meander? Why was Jove himself nursed upon a mountain? or why did the goddesses, when the prize of beauty was contested, try the cause upon the top of Ida? Such were the fictions by which the great masters of the earlier ages endeavoured to inculcate to posterity the im-

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portance of a garret, which, though they had been long obscured by the negligence and ignorance of succeeding times, were well enforced by the celebrated symbol of Pythagoras, ἀνεμῶν πνεόντων, τὴν ἦχω προσκύνει: "when the wind blows, worship its echo." This could not but be understood by his disciples as an inviolable injunction to live in a garret, which I have found frequently visited by the echo and the wind. Nor was the tradition wholly obliterated in the age of Augustus, for Tibullus evidently congratulates himself upon his garret, not without some allusion to the Pythagorean precept:

Quam juvat immites ventos audire cubantem——
Aut, gelidas hibernus aquas quum fuderit auster,
Securum somnos, imbre juvante, sequi! Lib. i. El. i. 45.

How sweet in sleep to pass the careless hours,
Lull'd by the beating winds and dashing show'rs!

And it is impossible not to discover the fondness of Lucretius, an earlier writer, for a garret, in his description of the lofty towers of serene learning, and of the pleasure with which a wise man looks down upon the confused and erratick state of the world moving below him:

Sed nil dulcius est, bene quam munita tenere
Edita doctrina sapientum templa serena;
Despicere unde queas alios, passimque videre
Errare, atque viam palanteis quærere vitæ. Lib. ii. 7.

——'Tis sweet thy lab'ring steps to guide
To virtue's heights, with wisdom well supplied,
And all the magazines of learning fortified:
From thence to look below on human kind,
Bewilder'd in the maze of life, and blind. DRYDEN.

The institution has, indeed, continued to our own time; the garret is still the usual receptacle of the philosopher and poet; but this, like many ancient customs, is perpetuated only by an accidental imitation, without knowledge of the original reason for which it was established:

Causa latet; res est notissima.
The cause is secret, but th' effect is known. ADDISON.

Conjectures have, indeed, been advanced concerning these habitations of literature, but without much satisfac-

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tion to the judicious inquirer. Some have imagined, that the garret is generally chosen by the wits as most easily rented; and concluded that no man rejoices in his aerial abode, but on the days of payment. Others suspect, that a garret is chiefly convenient, as it is remoter than any other part of the house from the outer door, which is often observed to be infested by visitants, who talk incessantly of beer, or linen, or a coat, and repeat the same sounds every morning, and sometimes again in the afternoon, without any variation, except that they grow daily more importunate and clamorous, and raise their voices in time from mournful murmurs to raging vociferations. This eternal monotony is always detestable to a man whose chief pleasure is to enlarge his knowledge, and vary his ideas. Others talk of freedom from noise, and abstraction from common business or amusements; and some, yet more visionary, tell us, that the faculties are enlarged by open prospects, and that the fancy is more at liberty, when the eye ranges without confinement.

These conveniencies may, perhaps, all be found in a well-chosen garret; but surely they cannot be supposed sufficiently important to have operated invariably upon different climates, distant ages, and separate nations. Of an universal practice, there must still be presumed an universal cause, which, however recondite and abstruse, may be, perhaps, reserved to make me illustrious by its discovery, and you by its promulgation.

It is universally known that the faculties of the mind are invigorated or weakened by the state of the body, and that the body is in a great measure regulated by the various compressions of the ambient element. The effects of the air in the production or cure of corporeal maladies have been acknowledged from the time of Hippocrates; but no man has yet sufficiently considered how far it may influence the operations of the genius, though every day affords instances of local understanding, of wits and reasoners, whose faculties are adapted to some single spot, and who, when they are removed to any other place, sink at

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once into silence and stupidity. I have discovered, by a long series of observations, that invention and elocution suffer great impediments from dense and impure vapours, and that the tenuity of a defecated air at a proper distance from the surface of the earth, accelerates the fancy, and sets at liberty those intellectual powers which were before shackled by too strong attraction, and unable to expand themselves under the pressure of a gross atmosphere. I have found dulness to quicken into sentiment in a thin ether, as water, though not very hot, boils in a receiver partly exhausted; and heads, in appearance empty, have teemed with notions upon rising ground, as the flaccid sides of a football would have swelled out into stiffness and extension.

For this reason I never think myself qualified to judge decisively of any man's faculties, whom I have only known in one degree of elevation; but take some opportunity of attending him from the cellar to the garret, and try upon him all the various degrees of rarefaction and condensation, tension and laxity. If he is neither vivacious aloft, nor serious below, I then consider him as hopeless; but as it seldom happens, that I do not find the temper to which the texture of his brain is fitted, I accommodate him in time with a tube of mercury, first marking the points most favourable to his intellects, according to rules which I have long studied, and which I may, perhaps, reveal to mankind in a complete treatise of barometrical pneumatology.

Another cause of the gaiety and sprightliness of the dwellers in garrets is probably the increase of that vertiginous motion, with which we are carried round by the diurnal revolution of the earth. The power of agitation upon the spirits is well known; every man has felt his heart lightened in a rapid vehicle, or on a galloping horse; and nothing is plainer, than that he who towers to the fifth story, is whirled through more space by every circumrotation, than another that grovels upon the ground-floor. The nations between the tropicks are known to be fiery, inconstant, inventive, and fanciful; because, living at the utmost length of the

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earth's diameter, they are carried about with more swiftness than those whom nature has placed nearer to the poles; and therefore as it becomes a wise man to struggle with the inconveniencies of his country, whenever celerity and acuteness are requisite, we must actuate our languor by taking a few turns round the centre in a garret.

If you imagine that I ascribe to air and motion effects which they cannot produce, I desire you to consult your own memory, and consider whether you have never known a man acquire reputation in his garret, which, when fortune or a patron had placed him upon the first floor, he was unable to maintain; and who never recovered his former vigour of understanding, till he was restored to his original situation. That a garret will make every man a wit, I am very far from supposing; I know there are some who would continue blockheads even on the summit of the Andes, or on the peak of Teneriffe. But let not any man be considered as unimprovable till this potent remedy has been tried; for perhaps he was formed to be great only in a garret, as the joiner of Aretæus was rational in no other place but his own shop.

I think a frequent removal to various distances from the centre, so necessary to a just estimate of intellectual abilities, and consequently of so great use in education, that if I hoped that the publick could be persuaded to so expensive an experiment, I would propose, that there should be a cavern dug, and a tower erected, like those which Bacon describes in Solomon's house, for the expansion and concentration of understanding, according to the exigence of different employments, or constitutions. Perhaps some that fume away in meditations upon time and space in the tower, might compose tables of interest at a certain depth; and he that upon level ground stagnates in silence, or creeps in narrative, might at the height of half a mile, ferment into merriment, sparkle with repartee, and froth with declamation.

Addison observes, that we may find the heat of Virgil's climate, in some lines of his Georgick: so, when I read a

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composition, I immediately determine the height of the author's habitation. As an elaborate performance is commonly said to smell of the lamp, my commendation of a noble thought, a sprightly sally, or a bold figure, is to pronounce it fresh from the garret; an expression which would break from me upon the perusal of most of your papers, did I not believe, that you sometimes quit the garret, and ascend into the cockloft.

HYPERTATUS.

N°. 118. SATURDAY, MAY 4, 1751.

——*Omnes illacrymabiles*
Urgentur, ignotique longa
Nocte. HOR. Lib. iv. Ode ix. 26.

In endless night they sleep, unwept, unknown. FRANCIS.

CICERO has, with his usual elegance and magnificence of language, attempted, in his relation of the dream of Scipio, to depreciate those honours for which he himself appears to have panted with restless solicitude, by showing within what narrow limits all that fame and celebrity which man can hope for from men is circumscribed.

"You see," says Africanus, pointing at the earth, from the celestial regions, "that the globe assigned to the residence and habitation of human beings is of small dimensions: how then can you obtain from the praise of men, any glory worthy of a wish? Of this little world the inhabited parts are neither numerous nor wide; even the spots where men are to be found are broken by intervening deserts, and the nations are so separated as that nothing can be transmitted from one to another. With the people of the south, by whom the opposite part of the earth is possessed, you have no intercourse; and by how small a tract do you communicate with the countries of the north? The territory which you inhabit is no more than a scanty island, inclosed by a small body of water, to which you give the name of the great sea and the Atlantick ocean. And even

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in this known and frequented continent, what hope can you entertain, that your renown will pass the stream of Ganges, or the cliffs of Caucasus? or by whom will your name be uttered in the extremities of the north or south, towards the rising or the setting sun? So narrow is the space to which your fame can be propagated; and even there how long will it remain?"

He then proceeds to assign natural causes why fame is not only narrow in its extent, but short in its duration; he observes the difference between the computation of time in earth and heaven, and declares, that according to the celestial chronology, no human honours can last a single year.

Such are the objections by which Tully has made a show of discouraging the pursuit of fame; objections which sufficiently discover his tenderness and regard for his darling phantom. Homer, when the plan of his poem made the death of Patroclus necessary, resolved, at least, that he should die with honour; and therefore brought down against him the patron god of Troy, and left to Hector only the mean task of giving the last blow to an enemy whom a divine hand had disabled from resistance. Thus Tully ennobles fame, which he professes to degrade, by opposing it to celestial happiness; he confines not its extent but by the boundaries of nature, nor contracts its duration but by representing it small in the estimation of superiour beings. He still admits it the highest and noblest of terrestrial objects, and alleges little more against it, than that it is neither without end, nor without limits.

What might be the effect of these observations conveyed in Ciceronian eloquence to Roman understandings, cannot be determined; but few of those who shall in the present age read my humble version will find themselves much depressed in their hopes, or retarded in their designs; for I am not inclined to believe, that they who among us pass their lives in the cultivation of knowledge, or acquisition of power, have very anxiously inquired what opinions prevail on the further banks of the Ganges, or invigorated any

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effort by the desire of spreading their renown among the clans of Caucasus. The hopes and fears of modern minds are content to range in a narrower compass; a single nation, and a few years, have generally sufficient amplitude to fill our imaginations.

A little consideration will indeed teach us, that fame has other limits than mountains and oceans; and that he who places happiness in the frequent repetition of his name, may spend his life in propagating it, without any danger of weeping for new worlds, or necessity of passing the Atlantick sea.

The numbers to whom any real and perceptible good or evil can be derived by the greatest power, or most active diligence, are inconsiderable; and where neither benefit nor mischief operates, the only motive to the mention or remembrance of others is curiosity; a passion, which, though in some degree universally associated to reason, is easily confined, overborne, or diverted from any particular object.

Among the lower classes of mankind, there will be found very little desire of any other knowledge than what may contribute immediately to the relief of some pressing uneasiness, or the attainment of some near advantage. The Turks are said to hear with wonder a proposal to walk out, only that they may walk back; and inquire why any man should labour for nothing: so those whose condition has always restrained them to the contemplation of their own necessities, and who have been accustomed to look forward only to a small distance, will scarcely understand, why nights and days should be spent in studies, which end in new studies, and which, according to Malherbe's observation, do not tend to lessen the price of bread; nor will the trader or manufacturer easily be persuaded, that much pleasure can arise from the mere knowledge of actions, performed in remote regions, or in distant times; or that any thing can deserve their inquiry, of which, κλέος οἷον ἀκούομεν, οὐδέ τι ἴδμεν, we can only hear the report, but which cannot influence our lives by any consequences.

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The truth is, that very few have leisure from indispensable business, to employ their thoughts upon narrative or characters; and among those to whom fortune has given the liberty of living more by their own choice, many create to themselves engagements, by the indulgence of some petty ambition, the admission of some insatiable desire, or the toleration of some predominant passion. The man whose whole wish is to accumulate money, has no other care than to collect interest, to estimate securities, and to engage for mortgages: the lover disdains to turn his ear to any other name than that of Corinna; and the courtier thinks the hour lost which is not spent in promoting his interest, and facilitating his advancement. The adventures of valour, and the discoveries of science, will find a cold reception, when they are obtruded upon an attention thus busy with its favourite amusement, and impatient of interruption or disturbance.

But not only such employments as seduce attention by appearances of dignity, or promises of happiness, may restrain the mind from excursion and inquiry; curiosity may be equally destroyed by less formidable enemies; it may be dissipated in trifles, or congealed by indolence. The sportsman and the man of dress have their heads filled with a fox or a horserace, a feather or a ball; and live in ignorance of every thing beside, with as much content as he that heaps up gold, or solicits preferment, digs the field, or beats the anvil; and some yet lower in the ranks of intellect, dream out their days without pleasure or business, without joy or sorrow, nor ever rouse from their lethargy to hear or think.

Even of those who have dedicated themselves to knowledge, the far greater part have confined their curiosity to a few objects, and have very little inclination to promote any fame, but that which their own studies entitle them to partake. The naturalist has no desire to know the opinions or conjectures of the philologer: the botanist looks upon the astronomer as a being unworthy of his regard: the lawyer scarcely hears the name of a physician without

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contempt; and he that is growing great and happy by electrifying a bottle, wonders how the world can be engaged by trifling prattle about war or peace.

If, therefore, he that imagines the world filled with his actions and praises, shall subduct from the number of his encomiasts, all those who are placed below the flight of fame, and who hear in the valleys of life no voice but that of necessity; all those who imagine themselves too important to regard him, and consider the mention of his name as an usurpation of their time; all who are too much or too little pleased with themselves, to attend to any thing external; all who are attracted by pleasure, or chained down by pain, to unvaried ideas; all who are withheld from attending his triumph by different pursuits; and all who slumber in universal negligence; he will find his renown straitened by nearer bounds than the rocks of Caucasus, and perceive that no man can be venerable or formidable, but to a small part of his fellow-creatures.

That we may not languish in our endeavours after excellence, it is necessary, that, as Africanus counsels his descendant, "we raise our eyes to higher prospects, and contemplate our future and eternal state, without giving up our hearts to the praise of crowds, or fixing our hopes on such rewards as human power can bestow."

N°. 119. TUESDAY, MAY 7, 1751.

Iliacos intra muros peccatur, et extra. HOR. Lib. i. Ep. ii. 16.
Faults lay on either side the Trojan tow'rs. ELPHINSTON.

TO THE RAMBLER.

SIR,

As, notwithstanding all that wit, or malice, or pride, or prudence will be able to suggest, men and women must at last pass their lives together, I have never, therefore, thought those writers friends to human happiness, who endeavour to excite in either sex a general contempt or

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suspicion of the other. To persuade them who are entering the world, and looking abroad for a suitable associate, that all are equally vitious, or equally ridiculous; that they who trust are certainly betrayed, and they who esteem are always disappointed; is not to awaken judgment, but to inflame temerity. Without hope there can be no caution. Those who are convinced, that no reason for preference can be found, will never harass their thoughts with doubt and deliberation; they will resolve, since they are doomed to misery, that no needless anxiety shall disturb their quiet; they will plunge at hazard into the crowd, and snatch the first hand that shall be held toward them.

That the world is overrun with vice, cannot be denied; but vice, however predominant, has not yet gained an unlimited dominion. Simple and unmingled good is not in our power, but we may generally escape a greater evil by suffering a less; and, therefore, those who undertake to initiate the young and ignorant in the knowledge of life, should be careful to inculcate the possibility of virtue and happiness, and to encourage endeavours by prospects of success.

You, perhaps, do not suspect, that these are the sentiments of one who has been subject, for many years, to all the hardships of antiquated virginity; has been long accustomed to the coldness of neglect, and the petulance of insult; has been mortified in full assemblies by inquiries after forgotten fashions, games long disused, and wits and beauties of ancient renown; has been invited, with malicious importunity, to the second wedding of many acquaintances; has been ridiculed by two generations of coquets in whispers intended to be heard; and been long considered by the airy and gay, as too venerable for familiarity, and too wise for pleasure. It is, indeed, natural for injury to provoke anger, and by continual repetition to produce an habitual asperity; yet I have hitherto struggled with so much vigilance against my pride and my resentment, that I have preserved my temper uncorrupted. I have not yet

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made it any part of my employment to collect sentences against marriage; nor am inclined to lessen the number of the few friends whom time has left me, by obstructing that happiness which I cannot partake, and venting my vexation in censures of the forwardness and indiscretion of girls, or the inconstancy, tastelessness, and perfidy of men.

It is, indeed, not very difficult to bear that condition to which we are not condemned by necessity, but induced by observation and choice; and therefore I, perhaps, have never yet felt all the malignity with which a reproach, edged with the appellation of old maid, swells some of those hearts in which it is infixed. I was not condemned in my youth to solitude, either by indigence or deformity, nor passed the earlier part of life without the flattery of courtship, and the joys of triumph. I have danced the round of gaiety amidst the murmurs of envy, and gratulations of applause; been attended from pleasure to pleasure by the great, the sprightly, and the vain; and seen my regard solicited by the obsequiousness of gallantry, the gaiety of wit, and the timidity of love. If, therefore, I am yet a stranger to nuptial happiness, I suffer only the consequences of my own resolves, and can look back upon the succession of lovers, whose addresses I have rejected, without grief, and without malice.

When my name first began to be inscribed upon glasses, I was honoured with the amorous professions of the gay Venustulus, a gentleman, who, being the only son of a wealthy family, had been educated in all the wantonness of expense, and softness of effeminacy. He was beautiful in his person, and easy in his address, and, therefore, soon gained upon my eye at an age when the sight is very little overruled by the understanding. He had not any power in himself of gladdening or amusing; but supplied his want of conversation by treats and diversions; and his chief art of courtship was to fill the mind of his mistress with parties, rambles, musick, and shows. We were often engaged in short excursions to gardens and seats, and I was for awhile pleased with the care which Venustulus

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discovered in securing me from any appearance of danger, or possibility of mischance. He never failed to recommend caution to his coachman, or to promise the waterman a reward if he landed us safe; and always contrived to return by daylight, for fear of robbers. This extraordinary solicitude was represented for a time as the effect of his tenderness for me; but fear is too strong for continued hypocrisy. I soon discovered that Venustulus had the cowardice as well as elegance of a female. His imagination was perpetually clouded with terrours, and he could scarcely refrain from screams and outcries at any accidental surprise. He durst not enter a room if a rat was heard behind the wainscot, nor cross a field where the cattle were frisking in the sunshine; the least breeze that waved upon the river was a storm, and every clamour in the street was a cry of fire. I have seen him lose his colour when my squirrel had broke his chain; and was forced to throw water in his face on the sudden entrance of a black cat. Compassion once obliged me to drive away with my fan, a beetle that kept him in distress, and chide off a dog that yelped at his heels, to which he would gladly have given up me to facilitate his own escape. Women naturally expect defence and protection from a lover or a husband, and, therefore, you will not think me culpable in refusing a wretch, who would have burdened life with unnecessary fears, and flown to me for that succour which it was his duty to have given.

My next lover was Fungoso, the son of a stockjobber, whose visits my friends, by the importunity of persuasion, prevailed upon me to allow. Fungoso was no very suitable companion; for having been bred in a counting-house, he spoke a language unintelligible in any other place. He had no desire of any reputation but that of an acute prognosticator of the changes in the funds; nor had any means of raising merriment, but by telling how somebody was overreached in a bargain by his father. He was, however, a youth of great sobriety and prudence, and frequently informed us how carefully he would improve my fortune. I

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was not in haste to conclude the match, but was so much awed by my parents, that I durst not dismiss him, and might, perhaps, have been doomed for ever to the grossness of pedlary, and the jargon of usury, had not a fraud been discovered in the settlement, which set me free from the persecution of grovelling pride, and pecuniary impudence.

I was afterwards six months without any particular notice, but at last became the idol of the glittering Flosculus, who prescribed the mode of embroidery to all the fops of his time, and varied at pleasure the cock of every hat, and the sleeve of every coat that appeared in fashionable assemblies. Flosculus made some impression upon my heart by a compliment which few ladies can hear without emotion; he commended my skill in dress, my judgment in suiting colours, and my art in disposing ornaments. But Flosculus was too much engaged by his own elegance, to be sufficiently attentive to the duties of a lover, or to please with varied praise an ear made delicate by riot of adulation. He expected to be repaid part of his tribute, and staid away three days, because I neglected to take notice of a new coat. I quickly found, that Flosculus was rather a rival than an admirer; and that we should probably live in a perpetual struggle of emulous finery, and spend our lives in stratagems to be first in the fashion.

I had soon after the honour at a feast of attracting the eyes of Dentatus, one of those human beings whose only happiness is to dine. Dentatus regaled me with foreign varieties, told me of measures that he had laid for procuring the best cook in France, and entertained me with bills of fare, prescribed the arrangement of dishes, and taught me two sauces invented by himself. At length, such is the uncertainty of human happiness, I declared my opinion too hastily upon a pie made under his own direction; after which he grew so cold and negligent, that he was easily dismissed.

Many other lovers, or pretended lovers, I have had the honour to lead awhile in triumph. But two of them I drove from me, by discovering that they had no taste or

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knowledge in musick; three I dismissed, because they were drunkards; two, because they paid their addresses at the same time to other ladies; and six, because they attempted to influence my choice by bribing my maid. Two more I discarded at the second visit for obscene allusions; and five for drollery on religion. In the latter part of my reign, I sentenced two to perpetual exile, for offering me settlements, by which the children of a former marriage would have been injured; four, for representing falsely the value of their estates; three, for concealing their debts; and one, for raising the rent of a decrepit tenant.

I have now sent you a narrative, which the ladies may oppose to the tale of Hymenæus. I mean not to depreciate the sex which has produced poets and philosophers, heroes and martyrs; but will not suffer the rising generation of beauties to be dejected by partial satire; or to imagine that those who censured them have not likewise their follies, and their vices. I do not yet believe happiness unattainable in marriage, though I have never yet been able to find a man, with whom I could prudently venture an inseparable union. It is necessary to expose faults, that their deformity may be seen; but the reproach ought not to be extended beyond the crime, nor either sex to be contemned, because some women, or men, are indelicate or dishonest.

I am, &c.

TRANQUILLA.

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N°. 120. SATURDAY, MAY 11, 1751.

Redditum Cyri solio Phraatem,
Dissidens plebi, numero beatorum
Eximit virtus, populumque falsis
Dedocet uti
Vocibus. HOR. Lib. ii. Od. ii. 17.

True virtue can the crowd unteach
Their false mistaken forms of speech;
Virtue, to crowds a foe profest,
Disdains to number with the blets
Phraates, by his slaves ador'd,
And to the Parthian crown restor'd. FRANCIS.

IN the reign of Jenghiz Can, conqueror of the east, in the city of Samarcand, lived Nouradin the merchant, renowned throughout all the regions of India, for the extent of his commerce, and the integrity of his dealings. His warehouses were filled with all the commodities of the remotest nations; every rarity of nature, every curiosity of art, whatever was valuable, whatever was useful, hasted to his hand. The streets were crowded with his carriages; the sea was covered with his ships; the streams of Oxus were wearied with conveyance, and every breeze of the sky wafted wealth to Nouradin.

At length Nouradin felt himself seized with a slow malady, which he first endeavoured to divert by application, and afterwards to relieve by luxury and indulgence; but finding his strength every day less, he was at last terrified, and called for help upon the sages of physick; they filled his apartments with alexipharmicks, restoratives, and essential virtues; the pearls of the ocean were dissolved, the spices of Arabia were distilled, and all the powers of nature were employed to give new spirits to his nerves, and new balsam to his blood. Nouradin was for some time amused with promises, invigorated with cordials, or soothed with anodynes; but the disease preyed upon his vitals, and he soon discovered with indignation, that health was not to be bought. He was confined to his chamber, deserted by his

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physicians, and rarely visited by his friends; but his unwillingness to die flattered him long with hopes of life.

At length, having passed the night in tedious languor, he called to him Almamoulin, his only son, and dismissing his attendants, "My son," says he, "behold here the weakness and fragility of man; look backward a few days, thy father was great and happy, fresh as the vernal rose, and strong as the cedar of the mountain; the nations of Asia drank his dews, and art and commerce delighted in his shade. Malevolence beheld me, and sighed: 'His root,' she cried, 'is fixed in the depths; it is watered by the fountains of Oxus; it sends out branches afar, and bids defiance to the blast; prudence reclines against his trunk, and prosperity dances on his top.' Now, Almamoulin, look upon me withering and prostrate; look upon me and attend. I have trafficked, I have prospered, I have rioted in gain; my house is splendid, my servants are numerous; yet I displayed only a small part of my riches; the rest, which I was hindered from enjoying by the fear of raising envy, or tempting rapacity, I have piled in towers, I have buried in caverns, I have hidden in secret repositories, which this scroll will discover. My purpose was, after ten months more spent in commerce, to have withdrawn my wealth to a safer country; to have given seven years to delight and festivity, and the remaining part of my days to solitude and repentance; but the hand of death is upon me; a frigorifick torpor encroaches upon my veins; I am now leaving the produce of my toil, which it must be thy business to enjoy with wisdom." The thought of leaving his wealth filled Nouradin with such grief, that he fell into convulsions, became dilirious, and expired.

Almamoulin, who loved his father, was touched awhile with honest sorrow, and sat two hours in profound meditation, without perusing the paper which he held in his hand. He then retired to his own chamber, as overborne with affliction, and there read the inventory of his new possessions, which swelled his heart with such transports, that he no longer lamented his father's death. He was now

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sufficiently composed to order a funeral of modest magnificence, suitable at once to the rank of Nouradin's profession, and the reputation of his wealth. The two next nights he spent in visiting the towers and the caverns, and found the treasures greater to his eye than to his imagination.

Almamoulin had been bred to the practice of exact frugality, and had often looked with envy on the finery and expenses of other young men: he therefore believed, that happiness was now in his power, since he could obtain all of which he had hitherto been accustomed to regret the want. He resolved to give a loose to his desires, to revel in enjoyment, and feel pain and uneasiness no more.

He immediately procured a splendid equipage, dressed his servants in rich embroidery, and covered his horses with golden caparisons. He showered down silver on the populace, and suffered their acclamations to swell him with insolence. The nobles saw him with anger, the wise men of the state combined against him, the leaders of armies threatened his destruction. Almamoulin was informed of his danger: he put on the robe of mourning in the presence of his enemies, and appeased them with gold, and gems, and supplication.

He then sought to strengthen himself by an alliance with the princes of Tartary, and offered the price of kingdoms for a wife of noble birth. His suit was generally rejected, and his presents refused; but the princess of Astracan once condescended to admit him to her presence. She received him, sitting on a throne, attired in the robe of royalty, and shining with the jewels of Golconda; command sparkled in her eyes, and dignity towered on her forehead. Almamoulin approached and trembled. She saw his confusion and disdained him: "How," says she, "dares the wretch hope my obedience, who thus shrinks at my glance? Retire, and enjoy thy riches in sordid ostentation; thou wast born to be wealthy, but never canst be great."

He then contracted his desires to more private and do-

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mestick pleasures. He built palaces, he laid out gardens [d], he changed the face of the land, he transplanted forests, he levelled mountains, opened prospects into distant regions, poured fountains from the tops of turrets, and rolled rivers through new channels.

These amusements pleased him for a time; but languor and weariness soon invaded him. His bowers lost their fragrance, and the waters murmured without notice. He purchased large tracts of land in distant provinces, adorned them with houses of pleasure, and diversified them with accommodations for different seasons. Change of place at first relieved his satiety, but all the novelties of situation were soon exhausted; he found his heart vacant, and his desires, for want of external objects, ravaging himself.

He, therefore, returned to Samarcand, and set open his doors to those whom idleness sends out in search of pleasure. His tables were always covered with delicacies; wines of every vintage sparkled in his bowls, and his lamps scattered perfumes. The sound of the lute, and the voice of the singer, chased away sadness; every hour was crowded with pleasure; and the day ended and began with feasts and dances, and revelry and merriment. Almamoulin cried out, "I have, at last, found the use of riches; I am surrounded by companions, who view my greatness without envy; and I enjoy at once the raptures of popularity, and the safety of an obscure station. What trouble can he feel, whom all are studious to please, that they may be repaid with pleasure? What danger can he dread to whom every man is a friend?"

Such were the thoughts of Almamoulin, as he looked down from a gallery upon the gay assembly regaling at his expense; but, in the midst of this soliloquy, an officer of justice entered the house, and, in the form of legal citation, summoned Almamoulin to appear before the emperor. The guests stood awhile aghast, then stole imper-

[d] See Vathek.

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ceptibly away, and he was led off without a single voice to witness his integrity. He now found one of his most frequent visitants accusing him of treason, in hopes of sharing his confiscation; yet, unpatronized and unsupported, he cleared himself by the openness of innocence, and the consistence of truth; he was dismissed with honour, and his accuser perished in prison.

Almamoulin now perceived with how little reason he had hoped for justice or fidelity from those who live only to gratify their senses; and, being now weary with vain experiments upon life and fruitless researches after felicity, he had recourse to a sage, who, after spending his youth in travel and observation, had retired from all human cares, to a small habitation on the banks of Oxus, where he conversed only with such as solicited his counsel. "Brother," said the philosopher, "thou has suffered thy reason to be deluded by idle hopes, and fallacious appearances. Having long looked with desire upon riches, thou hast taught thyself to think them more valuable than nature designed them, and to expect from them, what experience has now taught thee, that they cannot give. That they do not confer wisdom, thou mayest be convinced, by considering at how dear a price they tempted thee, upon thy first entrance into the world, to purchase the empty sound of vulgar acclamation. That they cannot bestow fortitude or magnanimity, that man may be certain, who stood trembling at Astracan, before a being not naturally superiour to himself. That they will not supply unexhausted pleasure, the recollection of forsaken palaces, and neglected gardens, will easily inform thee. That they rarely purchase friends, thou didst soon discover, when thou wert left to stand thy trial uncountenanced and alone. Yet think not riches useless; there are purposes to which a wise man may be delighted to apply them; they may, by a rational distribution to those who want them, ease the pains of helpless disease, still the throbs of restless anxiety, relieve innocence from oppression, and raise imbecility to cheerfulness and vigour. This they will enable

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thee to perform, and this will afford the only happiness ordained for our present state, the confidence of divine favour, and the hope of future rewards."

N°. 121. TUESDAY, MAY 14, 1751.

O imitatores, servum pecus! HOR. Lib. i. Ep. xix. 19.
Away, ye imitators, servile herd! ELPHINSTON.

I HAVE been informed by a letter from one of the universities, that among the youth from whom the next swarm of reasoners is to learn philosophy, and the next flight of beauties to hear elegies and sonnets, there are many, who, instead of endeavouring by books and meditation to form their own opinions, content themselves with the secondary knowledge, which a convenient bench in a coffee-house can supply; and without any examination or distinction, adopt the criticisms and remarks, which happen to drop from those who have risen, by merit or fortune, to reputation and authority.

These humble retailers of knowledge my correspondent stigmatizes with the name of Echoes; and seems desirous that they should be made ashamed of lazy submission, and animated to attempts after new discoveries and original sentiments.

It is very natural for young men to be vehement, acrimonious, and severe. For, as they seldom comprehend at once all the consequences of a position, or perceive the difficulties by which cooler and more experienced reasoners are restrained from confidence, they form their conclusions with great precipitance. Seeing nothing that can darken or embarrass the question, they expect to find their own opinion universally prevalent, and are inclined to impute uncertainty and hesitation to want of honesty, rather than of knowledge. I may, perhaps, therefore, be reproached by my lively correspondent, when it shall be found, that I have no inclination to persecute these collec-

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tors of fortuitous knowledge with the severity required; yet, as I am now too old to be much pained by hasty censure, I shall not be afraid of taking into protection those whom I think condemned without a sufficient knowledge of their cause.

He that adopts the sentiments of another, whom he has reason to believe wiser than himself, is only to be blamed when he claims the honours which are not due but to the author, and endeavours to deceive the world into praise and veneration; for, to learn, is the proper business of youth; and whether we increase our knowledge by books or by conversation, we are equally indebted to foreign assistance.

The greater part of students are not born with abilities to construct systems, or advance knowledge; nor can have any hope beyond that of becoming intelligent hearers in the schools of art, of being able to comprehend what others discover, and to remember what others teach. Even those to whom providence hath allotted greater strength of understanding, can expect only to improve a single science. In every other part of learning, they must be content to follow opinions, which they are not able to examine; and, even in that which they claim as peculiarly their own, can seldom add more than some small particle of knowledge, to the hereditary stock devolved to them from ancient times, the collective labour of a thousand intellects.

In science, which, being fixed and limited, admits of no other variety than such as arises from new methods of distribution, or new arts of illustration, the necessity of following the traces of our predecessors is indisputably evident; but there appears no reason, why imagination should be subject to the same restraint. It might be conceived, that of those who profess to forsake the narrow paths of truth, every one may deviate towards a different point, since, though rectitude is uniform and fixed, obliquity may be infinitely diversified. The roads of science are narrow, so that they who travel them, must either

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follow or meet one another; but, in the boundless regions of possibility, which fiction claims for her dominion, there are surely a thousand recesses unexplored, a thousand flowers unplucked, a thousand fountains unexhausted, combinations of imagery yet unobserved, and races of ideal inhabitants not hitherto described.

Yet, whatever hope may persuade, or reason evince, experience can boast of very few additions to ancient fable. The wars of Troy, and the travels of Ulysses, have furnished almost all succeeding poets with incidents, characters, and sentiments. The Romans are confessed to have attempted little more than to display in their own tongue the inventions of the Greeks. There is, in all their writings, such a perpetual recurrence of allusions to the tales of the fabulous age, that they must be confessed often to want that power of giving pleasure which novelty supplies; nor can we wonder that they excelled so much in the graces of diction, when we consider how rarely they were employed in search of new thoughts.

The warmest admirers of the great Mantuan poet can extol him for little more than the skill with which he has, by making his hero both a traveller and a warriour, united the beauties of the Iliad and the Odyssey in one composition: yet his judgment was, perhaps, sometimes overborne by his avarice of the Homerick treasures; and, for fear of suffering a sparkling ornament to be lost, he has inserted it where it cannot shine with its original splendour.

When Ulysses visited the infernal regions, he found, among the heroes that perished at Troy, his competitor, Ajax, who, when the arms of Achilles were adjudged to Ulysses, died by his own hand in the madness of disappointment. He still appeared to resent, as on earth, his loss and disgrace. Ulysses endeavoured to pacify him with praises and submission; but Ajax walked away without reply. This passage has always been considered as eminently beautiful; because Ajax, the haughty chief, the unlettered soldier, of unshaken courage, of immovable constancy, but without the power of recommending his own

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virtues by eloquence, or enforcing his assertions by any other argument than the sword, had no way of making his anger known, but by gloomy sullenness and dumb ferocity. His hatred of a man whom he conceived to have defeated him only by volubility of tongue, was therefore naturally shown by silence more contemptuous and piercing than any words that so rude an orator could have found, and by which he gave his enemy no opportunity of exerting the only power in which he was superiour.

When Æneas is sent by Virgil to the shades, he meets Dido, the queen of Carthage, whom his perfidy had hurried to the grave; he accosts her with tenderness and excuses; but the lady turns away, like Ajax, in mute disdain. She turns away like Ajax; but she resembles him in none of those qualities which give either dignity or propriety to silence. She might, without any departure from the tenour of her conduct, have burst out, like other injured women, into clamour, reproach, and denunciation; but Virgil had his imagination full of Ajax, and therefore could not prevail on himself to teach Dido any other mode of resentment.

If Virgil could be thus seduced by imitation, there will be little hope that common wits should escape; and, accordingly, we find, that besides the universal and acknowledged practice of copying the ancients, there has prevailed, in every age, a particular species of fiction. At one time, all truth was conveyed in allegory; at another, nothing was seen but in a vision; at one period, all the poets followed sheep, and every event produced a pastoral; at another they busied themselves wholly in giving directions to a painter.

It is, indeed, easy to conceive why any fashion should become popular, by which idleness is favoured, and imbecility assisted; but surely no man of genius can much applaud himself for repeating a tale with which the audience is already tired, and which could bring no honour to any but its inventor.

There are, I think, two schemes of writing, on which

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the laborious wits of the present time employ their faculties. One is the adaptation of sense to all the rhymes which our language can supply to some word, that makes the burden of the stanza; but this, as it has been only used in a kind of amorous burlesque, can scarcely be censured with much acrimony. The other is the imitation of Spenser, which, by the influence of some men of learning and genius, seems likely to gain upon the age, and therefore deserves to be more attentively considered.

To imitate the fictions and sentiments of Spenser can incur no reproach, for allegory is perhaps one of the most pleasing vehicles of instruction. But I am very far from extending the same respect to his diction or his stanza. His style was in his own time allowed to be vitious, so darkened with old words and peculiarities of phrase, and so remote from common use, that Jonson boldly pronounces him *to have written no language*. His stanza is at once difficult and unpleasing; tiresome to the ear by its uniformity, and to the attention by its length. It was at first formed in imitation of the Italian poets, without due regard to the genius of our language. The Italians have little variety of termination, and were forced to contrive such a stanza as might admit the greatest number of similar rhymes; but our words end with so much diversity, that it is seldom convenient for us to bring more than two of the same sound together. If it be justly observed by Milton, that rhyme obliges poets to express their thoughts in improper terms, these improprieties must always be multiplied, as the difficulty of rhyme is increased by long concatenations.

The imitators of Spenser are, indeed, not very rigid censors of themselves, for they seem to conclude, that when they have disfigured their lines with a few obsolete syllables, they have accomplished their design, without considering that they ought not only to admit old words, but to avoid new. The laws of imitation are broken by every word introduced since the time of Spenser, as the character of Hector is violated by quoting Aristotle in the play. It

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would, indeed, be difficult to exclude from a long poem all modern phrases, though it is easy to sprinkle it with gleanings of antiquity. Perhaps, however, the style of Spenser might, by long labour, be justly copied; but life is, surely, given us for higher purposes than to gather what our ancestors have wisely thrown away, and to learn what is of no value, but because it has been forgotten.

N°. 122. SATURDAY, MAY 18, 1751.

Nescio qua natale solum dulcedine captos
Ducit. OVID. Ex Pont. Lib. i. Ep. iii. 35.
By secret charms our native land attracts.

NOTHING is more subject to mistake and disappointment than anticipated judgment concerning the easiness or difficulty of any undertaking, whether we form our opinion from the performances of others, or from abstracted contemplation of the thing to be attempted.

Whatever is done skilfully appears to be done with ease; and art, when it is once matured to habit, vanishes from observation. We are, therefore, more powerfully excited to emulation, by those who have attained the highest degree of excellence, and whom we can, therefore, with least reason hope to equal.

In adjusting the probability of success by a previous consideration of the undertaking, we are equally in danger of deceiving ourselves. It is never easy, nor often possible, to comprise the series of any process with all its circumstances, incidents, and variations, in a speculative scheme. Experience soon shows us the tortuosities of imaginary rectitude, the complications of simplicity, and the asperities of smoothness. Sudden difficulties often start up from the ambushes of art, stop the career of activity, repress the gaiety of confidence, and, when we imagine ourselves almost at the end of our labours, drive us back to new plans and different measures.

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There are many things which we every day see others unable to perform, and, perhaps, have even ourselves miscarried in attempting; and yet can hardly allow to be difficult; nor can we forbear to wonder afresh at every new failure, or to promise certainty of success to our next essay; but when we try, the same hindrances recur, the same inability is perceived, and the vexation of disappointment must again be suffered.

Of the various kinds of speaking or writing, which serve necessity, or promote pleasure, none appears so artless or easy as simple narration; for what should make him that knows the whole order and progress of an affair unable to relate it? Yet we hourly find such as endeavour to entertain or instruct us by recitals, clouding the facts which they intend to illustrate, and losing themselves and their auditors in wilds and mazes, in digression and confusion. When we have congratulated ourselves upon a new opportunity of inquiry, and new means of information, it often happens, that without designing either deceit or concealment, without ignorance of the fact, or unwillingness to disclose it, the relater fills the ear with empty sounds, harasses the attention with fruitless impatience, and disturbs the imagination by a tumult of events, without order of time, or train of consequence.

It is natural to believe, upon the same principle, that no writer has a more easy task than the historian. The philosopher has the works of omniscience to examine; and is, therefore, engaged in disquisitions, to which finite intellects are utterly unequal. The poet trusts to his invention, and is not only in danger of those inconsistencies, to which every one is exposed by departure from truth; but may be censured as well for deficiencies of matter, as for irregularity of disposition, or impropriety of ornament. But the happy historian has no other labour than of gathering what tradition pours down before him, or records treasure for his use. He has only the actions and designs of men like himself to conceive and to relate; he is not to form, but copy characters, and, therefore, is not blamed for

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the inconsistency of statesmen, the injustice of tyrants, or the cowardice of commanders. The difficulty of making variety consistent, or uniting probability with surprise, needs not to disturb him; the manners and actions of his personages are already fixed; his materials are provided and put into his hands, and he is at leisure to employ all his powers in arranging and displaying them.

Yet, even with these advantages, very few in any age have been able to raise themselves to reputation by writing histories; and among the innumerable authors, who fill every nation with accounts of their ancestors, or undertake to transmit to futurity the events of their own time, the greater part, when fashion and novelty have ceased to recommend them, are of no other use than chronological memorials, which necessity may sometimes require to be consulted, but which fright away curiosity, and disgust delicacy.

It is observed, that our nation, which has produced so many authors eminent for almost every other species of literary excellence, has been hitherto remarkably barren of historical genius; and so far has this defect raised prejudices against us, that some have doubted whether an Englishman can stop at that mediocrity of style, or confine his mind to that even tenour of imagination, which narrative requires.

They who can believe that nature has so capriciously distributed understanding, have surely no claim to the honour of serious confutation. The inhabitants of the same country have opposite characters in different ages; the prevalence or neglect of any particular study can proceed only from the accidental influence of some temporary cause; and if we have failed in history, we can have failed only because history has not hitherto been diligently cultivated.

But how is it evident, that we have not historians among us, whom we may venture to place in comparison with any that the neighbouring nations can produce? The attempt of Raleigh is deservedly celebrated for the labour of his researches, and the elegance of his style; but he

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has endeavoured to exert his judgment more than his genius, to select facts, rather than adorn them; and has produced an historical dissertation, but seldom risen to the majesty of history.

The works of Clarendon deserve more regard. His diction is, indeed, neither exact in itself, nor suited to the purpose of history. It is the effusion of a mind crowded with ideas, and desirous of imparting them; and, therefore, always accumulating words, and involving one clause and sentence in another. But there is in his negligence a rude inartificial majesty, which, without the nicety of laboured elegance, swells the mind by its plenitude and diffusion. His narration is not, perhaps, sufficiently rapid, being stopped too frequently by particularities, which, though they might strike the author who was present at the transactions, will not equally detain the attention of posterity. But his ignorance or carelessness of the art of writing is amply compensated by his knowledge of nature and of policy; the wisdom of his maxims, the justness of his reasonings, and the variety, distinctness, and strength of his characters.

But none of our writers can, in my opinion, justly contest the superiority of Knolles, who, in his history of the Turks, has displayed all the excellencies that narration can admit. His style, though somewhat obscured by time, and sometimes vitiated by false wit, is pure, nervous, elevated, and clear. A wonderful multiplicity of events is so artfully arranged, and so distinctly explained, that each facilitates the knowledge of the next. Whenever a new personage is introduced, the reader is prepared by his character for his actions; when a nation is first attacked, or city besieged, he is made acquainted with its history, or situation; so that a great part of the world is brought into view. The descriptions of this author are without minuteness, and the digressions without ostentation. Collateral events are so artfully woven into the contexture of his principal story, that they cannot be disjoined without leaving it lacerated and broken. There is nothing turgid in

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his dignity, nor superfluous in his copiousness. His orations only, which he feigns, like the ancient historians, to have been pronounced on remarkable occasions, are tedious and languid; and since they are merely the voluntary sports of imagination, prove how much the most judicious and skilful may be mistaken in the estimate of their own powers.

Nothing could have sunk this author in obscurity, but the remoteness and barbarity of the people, whose story he relates. It seldom happens, that all circumstances concur to happiness or fame. The nation which produced this great historian, has the grief of seeing his genius employed upon a foreign and uninteresting subject; and that writer who might have secured perpetuity to his name, by a history of his own country, has exposed himself to the danger of oblivion, by recounting enterprises and revolutions, of which none desire to be informed.

N°. 123. TUESDAY, MAY 21, 1751.

Quo semel est imbuta recens, servabit odorem
Testa diu.——— HOR. Lib. i. Ep. ii. 69.

What season'd first the vessel, keeps the taste. CREECH.

TO THE RAMBLER.

SIR,

THOUGH I have so long found myself deluded by projects of honour and distinction, that I often resolve to admit them no more into my heart; yet how determinately soever excluded, they always recover their dominion by force or stratagem; and whenever, after the shortest relaxation of vigilance, reason and caution return to their charge, they find hope again in possession, with all her train of pleasures dancing about her.

Even while I am preparing to write a history of disappointed expectations, I cannot forbear to flatter myself, that you and your readers are impatient for my perform-

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ance; and that the sons of learning have laid down several of your late papers with discontent, when they found that Misocapelus had delayed to continue his narrative.

But the desire of gratifying the expectations that I have raised, is not the only motive of this relation, which, having once promised it, I think myself no longer at liberty to forbear. For, however I may have wished to clear myself from every other adhesion of trade, I hope I shall be always wise enough to retain my punctuality, and amidst all my new arts of politeness, continue to despise negligence, and detest falsehood.

When the death of my brother had dismissed me from the duties of a shop, I considered myself as restored to the rights of my birth, and entitled to the rank and reception which my ancestors obtained. I was, however, embarrassed with many difficulties at my first reentrance into the world; for my haste to be a gentleman inclined me to precipitate measures; and every accident that forced me back towards my old station, was considered by me as an obstruction of my happiness.

It was with no common grief and indignation, that I found my former companions still daring to claim my notice, and the journeymen and apprentices sometimes pulling me by the sleeve as I was walking in the street, and without any terrour of my new sword, which was, notwithstanding, of an uncommon size, inviting me to partake of a bottle at the old house, and entertaining me with histories of the girls in the neighbourhood. I had always, in my officinal state, been kept in awe by lace and embroidery; and imagined that, to fright away these unwelcome familiarities, nothing was necessary, but that I should, by splendour of dress, proclaim my reunion with a higher rank. I, therefore, sent for my tailor; ordered a suit with twice the usual quantity of lace; and that I might not let my persecutors increase their confidence, by the habit of accosting me, staid at home till it was made.

This week of confinement I passed in practising a forbidding frown, a smile of condescension, a slight salutation,

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and an abrupt departure; and in four mornings was able to turn upon my heel, with so much levity and sprightliness, that I made no doubt of discouraging all publick attempts upon my dignity. I, therefore, issued forth in my new coat, with a resolution of dazzling intimacy to a fitter distance; and pleased myself with the timidity and reverence, which I should impress upon all who had hitherto presumed to harass me with their freedoms. But, whatever was the cause, I did not find myself received with any new degree of respect; those whom I intended to drive from me, ventured to advance with their usual phrases of benevolence; and those whose acquaintance I solicited, grew more supercilious and reserved. I began soon to repent the expense, by which I had procured no advantage, and to suspect that a shining dress, like a weighty weapon, has no force in itself, but owes all its efficacy to him that wears it.

Many were the mortifications and calamities which I was condemned to suffer in my initiation to politeness. I was so much tortured by the incessant civilities of my companions, that I never passed through that region of the city but in a chair with the curtains drawn; and at last left my lodgings, and fixed myself in the verge of the court. Here I endeavoured to be thought a gentleman just returned from his travels, and was pleased to have my landlord believe that I was in some danger from importunate creditors; but this scheme was quickly defeated by a formal deputation sent to offer me, though I had now retired from business, the freedom of my company.

I was now detected in trade, and therefore resolved to stay no longer. I hired another apartment, and changed my servants. Here I lived very happily for three months, and, with secret satisfaction, often overheard the family celebrating the greatness and felicity of the esquire; though the conversation seldom ended without some complaint of my covetousness, or some remark upon my language, or my gait. I now began to venture into the publick walks, and to know the faces of nobles and beauties; but

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could not observe, without wonder, as I passed by them, how frequently they were talking of a tailor. I longed, however, to be admitted to conversation, and was somewhat weary of walking in crowds without a companion, yet continued to come and go with the rest, till a lady whom I endeavoured to protect in a crowded passage, as she was about to step into her chariot, thanked me for my civility, and told me, that, as she had often distinguished me for my modest and respectful behaviour, whenever I set up for myself, I might expect to see her among my first customers.

Here was an end of all my ambulatory projects. I, indeed, sometimes entered the walks again, but was always blasted by this destructive lady, whose mischievous generosity recommended me to her acquaintance. Being, therefore, forced to practise my adscititious character upon another stage, I betook myself to a coffee-house frequented by wits, among whom I learned, in a short time, the cant of criticism, and talked so loudly and volubly of nature, and manners, and sentiment, and diction, and similes, and contrasts, and action, and pronunciation, that I was often desired to lead the hiss and clap, and was feared and hated by the players and the poets. Many a sentence have I hissed, which I did not understand, and many a groan have I uttered, when the ladies were weeping in the boxes. At last a malignant author, whose performance I had persecuted through the nine nights, wrote an epigram upon Tape the critick, which drove me from the pit for ever.

My desire to be a fine gentleman still continued: I therefore, after a short suspense, chose a new set of friends at the gaming-table, and was for some time pleased with the civility and openness with which I found myself treated. I was indeed obliged to play; but being naturally timorous and vigilant, was never surprised into large sums. What might have been the consequence of long familiarity with these plunderers, I had not an opportunity of knowing; for one night the constables entered and seized us, and I was once more compelled to sink into my former

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condition, by sending for my old master to attest my character.

When I was deliberating to what new qualifications I should aspire, I was summoned into the country, by an account of my father's death. Here I had hopes of being able to distinguish myself, and to support the honour of my family. I, therefore, bought guns and horses, and, contrary to the expectation of the tenants, increased the salary of the huntsman. But when I entered the field, it was soon discovered, that I was not destined to the glories of the chase. I was afraid of thorns in the thicket, and of dirt in the marsh; I shivered on the brink of a river while the sportsmen crossed it, and trembled at the sight of a five-bar gate. When the sport and danger were over, I was still equally disconcerted; for I was effeminate, though not delicate, and could only join a feeble whispering voice in the clamours of their triumph.

A fall, by which my ribs were broken, soon recalled me to domestick pleasures, and I exerted all my art to obtain the favour of the neighbouring ladies; but wherever I came, there was always some unlucky conversation upon ribands, fillets, pins, or thread, which drove all my stock of compliments out of my memory, and overwhelmed me with shame and dejection.

Thus I passed the first ten years after the death of my brother, in which I have learned at last to repress that ambition, which I could never gratify; and, instead of wasting more of my life in vain endeavours after accomplishments, which, if not early acquired, no endeavours can obtain, I shall confine my care to those higher excellencies which are in every man's power, and though I cannot enchant affection by elegance and ease, hope to secure esteem by honesty and truth.

I am, &c.

MISOCAPELUS.

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N°. 124. SATURDAY, MAY 25, 1751.

——Tacitum sylvas inter reptare salubres,
Curantem quicquid dignum sapient bonoque est? HOR. Lib. i. Ep. iv. 4.
To range in silence through each healthful wood,
And muse what's worthy of the wise and good. ELPHINSTON.

THE season of the year is now come, in which the theatres are shut, and the card-tables forsaken; the regions of luxury are for awhile unpeopled, and pleasure leads out her votaries to groves and gardens, to still scenes and erratick gratifications. Those who have passed many months in a continual tumult of diversion; who have never opened their eyes in the morning, but upon some new appointment; nor slept at night without a dream of dances, musick, and good hands, or of soft sighs and humble supplications; must now retire to distant provinces, where the syrens of flattery are scarcely to be heard, where beauty sparkles without praise or envy, and wit is repeated only by the echo.

As I think it one of the most important duties of social benevolence to give warning of the approach of calamity, when by timely prevention it may be turned aside, or by preparatory measures be more easily endured, I cannot feel the increasing warmth, or observe the lengthening days, without considering the condition of my fair readers, who are now preparing to leave all that has so long filled up their hours, all from which they have been accustomed to hope for delight; and who, till fashion proclaims the liberty of returning to the seats of mirth and elegance, must endure the rugged 'squire, the sober housewife, the loud huntsman, or the formal parson, the roar of obstreperous jollity, or the dulness of prudential instruction; without any retreat, but to the gloom of solitude, where they will yet find greater inconveniencies, and must learn, however unwillingly, to endure themselves.

In winter, the life of the polite and gay may be said to roll on with a strong and rapid current; they float along

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from pleasure to pleasure, without the trouble of regulating their own motions, and pursue the course of the stream in all the felicity of inattention; content that they find themselves in progression, and careless whither they are going. But the months of summer are a kind of sleeping stagnation, without wind or tide, where they are left to force themselves forward by their own labour, and to direct their passage by their own skill; and where, if they have not some internal principle of activity, they must be stranded upon shallows, or lie torpid in a perpetual calm.

There are, indeed, some to whom this universal dissolution of gay societies affords a welcome opportunity of quitting, without disgrace, the post which they have found themselves unable to maintain; and of seeming to retreat only at the call of nature, from assemblies where, after a short triumph of uncontested superiority, they are overpowered by some new intruder of softer elegance or sprightlier vivacity. By these, hopeless of victory, and yet ashamed to confess a conquest, the summer is regarded as a release from the fatiguing service of celebrity, a dismission to more certain joys and a safer empire. They now solace themselves with the influence which they shall obtain, where they have no rival to fear; and with the lustre which they shall effuse, when nothing can be seen of brighter splendour. They imagine, while they are preparing for their journey, the admiration with which the rusticks will crowd about them; plan the laws of a new assembly; or contrive to delude provincial ignorance with a fictitious mode. A thousand pleasing expectations swarm in the fancy; and all the approaching weeks are filled with distinctions, honours, and authority.

But others, who have lately entered the world, or have yet had no proofs of its inconstancy and desertion, are cut off, by this cruel interruption, from the enjoyment of their prerogatives, and doomed to lose four months in inactive obscurity. Many complaints do vexation and desire extort from those exiled tyrants of the town, against the inexorable sun, who pursues his course without any regard

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to love or beauty; and visits either tropick at the stated time, whether shunned or courted, deprecated or implored.

To them who leave the places of publick resort in the full bloom of reputation, and withdraw from admiration, courtship, submission, and applause, a rural triumph can give nothing equivalent. The praise of ignorance, and the subjection of weakness, are little regarded by beauties who have been accustomed to more important conquests, and more valuable panegyricks. Nor, indeed, should the powers which have made havock in the theatres, or borne down rivalry in courts, be degraded to a mean attack upon the untravelled heir, or ignoble contest with the ruddy milkmaid.

How then must four long months be worn away? Four months, in which there will be no routs, no shows, no ridottos; in which visits must be regulated by the weather, and assemblies will depend upon the moon! The Platonists imagine, that the future punishment of those who have, in this life, debased their reason by subjection to their senses, and have preferred the gross gratifications of lewdness and luxury, to the pure and sublime felicity of virtue and contemplation, will arise from the predominance and solicitations of the same appetites, in a state which can furnish no means of appeasing them. I cannot but suspect that this month, bright with sunshine, and fragrant with perfumes; this month, which covers the meadow with verdure, and decks the gardens with all the mixtures of colorifick radiance; this month, from which the man of fancy expects new infusions of imagery, and the naturalist new scenes of observation; this month will chain down multitudes to the Platonick penance of desire without enjoyment, and hurry them from the highest satisfactions, which they have yet learned to conceive, into a state of hopeless wishes and pining recollection, where the eye of vanity will look round for admiration to no purpose, and the hand of avarice shuffle cards in a bower with ineffectual dexterity.

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From the tediousness of this melancholy suspension of life, I would willingly preserve those who are exposed to it, only by inexperience; who want not inclination to wisdom or virtue, though they have been dissipated by negligence, or misled by example; and who would gladly find the way to rational happiness, though it should be necessary to struggle with habit, and abandon fashion. To these many arts of spending time might be recommended, which would neither sadden the present hour with weariness, nor the future with repentance.

It would seem impossible to a solitary speculatist, that a human being can want employment. To be born in ignorance with a capacity of knowledge, and to be placed in the midst of a world filled with variety, perpetually pressing upon the senses and irritating curiosity, is surely a sufficient security against the languishment of inattention. Novelty is, indeed, necessary to preserve eagerness and alacrity; but art and nature have stores inexhaustible by human intellects; and every moment produces something new to him, who has quickened his faculties by diligent observation.

Some studies, for which the country and the summer afford peculiar opportunities, I shall, perhaps, endeavour to recommend in a future essay; but if there be any apprehension not apt to admit unaccustomed ideas, or any attention so stubborn and inflexible, as not easily to comply with new directions, even these obstructions cannot exclude the pleasure of application; for there is a higher and nobler employment, to which all faculties are adapted by him who gave them. The duties of religion, sincerely and regularly performed, will always be sufficient to exalt the meanest, and to exercise the highest understanding. That mind will never be vacant, which is frequently recalled by stated duties to meditations on eternal interests; nor can any hour be long, which is spent in obtaining some new qualification for celestial happiness.

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N°. 125. TUESDAY, MAY 28, 1751.

Descriptas servare vices, operumque colores,
Cur ego, si nequeo ignoroque, poeta salutor? Hor. De Ar. Poet. 86.

But if, through weakness, or my want of art,
I can't to ev'ry diff'rent style impart
The proper strokes and colours it may claim,
Why am I honour'd with a poet's name? Francis.

It is one of the maxims of the civil law, that *definitions are hazardous*. Things modified by human understandings, subject to varieties of complication, and changeable as experience advances knowledge, or accident influences caprice, are scarcely to be included in any standing form of expression, because they are always suffering some alteration of their state. Definition is, indeed, not the province of man; every thing is set above or below our faculties. The works and operations of nature are too great in their extent, or too much diffused in their relations, and the performances of art too inconstant and uncertain, to be reduced to any determinate idea. It is impossible to impress upon our minds an adequate and just representation of an object so great that we can never take it into our view, or so mutable that it is always changing under our eye, and has already lost its form while we are labouring to conceive it.

Definitions have been no less difficult or uncertain in criticisms than in law: imagination, a licentious and vagrant faculty, unsusceptible of limitations, and impatient of restraint, has always endeavoured to baffle the logician, to perplex the confines of distinction, and burst the inclosures of regularity. There is therefore scarcely any species of writing, of which we can tell what is its essence, and what are its constituents; every new genius produces some innovation, which, when invented and approved, subverts the rules which the practice of foregoing authors had established.

Comedy has been particularly unpropitious to definers;

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for though, perhaps, they might properly have contented themselves, with declaring it to be *such a dramatick representation of human life, as may excite mirth*, they have embarrassed their definition with the means by which the comick writers attain their end, without considering that the various methods of exhilarating their audience, not being limited by nature, cannot be comprised in precept. Thus, some make comedy a representation of mean, and others of bad men; some think that its essence consists in the unimportance, others in the fictitiousness of the transaction. But any man's reflections will inform him, that every dramatick composition which raises mirth, is comick; and that, to raise mirth, it is by no means universally necessary, that the personages should be either mean or corrupt, nor always requisite, that the action should be trivial, nor ever, that it should be fictitious.

If the two kinds of dramatick poetry had been defined only by their effects upon the mind, some absurdities might have been prevented, with which the compositions of our greatest poets are disgraced, who, for want of some settled ideas and accurate distinctions, have unhappily confounded tragick with comick sentiments. They seem to have thought, that as the meanness of personages constituted comedy, their greatness was sufficient to form a tragedy; and that nothing was necessary but that they should crowd the scene with monarchs, and generals, and guards; and make them talk, at certain intervals, of the downfal of kingdoms, and the rout of armies. They have not considered, that thoughts or incidents, in themselves ridiculous, grow still more grotesque by the solemnity of such characters; that reason and nature are uniform and inflexible; and that what is despicable and absurd, will not, by any association with splendid titles, become rational or great; that the most important affairs, by an intermixture of an unseasonable levity, may be made contemptible; and that the robes of royalty can give no dignity to nonsense or to folly.

"Comedy," says Horace, "sometimes raises her voice;"

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and tragedy, may, likewise, on proper occasions, abate her dignity; but as the comick personages can only depart from their familiarity of style, when the more violent passions are put in motion, the heroes and queens of tragedy should never descend to trifle, but in the hours of ease, and intermissions of danger. Yet, in the tragedy of Don Sebastian, when the king of Portugal is in the hands of his enemy, and having just drawn the lot, by which he is condemned to die, breaks out into a wild boast that his dust shall take possession of Africk, the dialogue proceeds thus between the captive and his conqueror:

Muley Moluch. What shall I do to conquer thee?
Seb. Impossible!
Souls know no conquerors.
M. Mol. I'll show thee for a monster thro' my Africk.
Seb. No, thou canst only show me for a man:
Africk is stored with monsters; man's a prodigy
Thy subjects have not seen.
M. Mol. Thou talk'st as if
Still at the head of battle.
Seb. Thou mistak'st,
For there I would not talk.
Benducar, the Minister. Sure he would sleep.

This conversation, with the sly remark of the minister, can only be found not to be comick, because it wants the probability necessary to representations of common life, and degenerates too much towards buffoonery and farce.

The same play affords a smart return of the general to the emperor, who, enforcing his orders for the death of Sebastian, vents his impatience in this abrupt threat:

——No more replies,
But see thou do'st it; Or,——

To which Dorax answers,

Choak in that threat: I can say Or as loud.

A thousand instances of such impropriety might be produced, were not one scene in Aureng-Zebe sufficient to exemplify it. Indamora, a captive queen, having Aureng-

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Zebe for her lover, employs Arimant, to whose charge she had been entrusted, and whom she had made sensible of her charms, to carry her message to his rival.

ARIMANT, *with a letter in his hand:* INDAMORA.

Arim. And I the messenger to him from you?
Your empire you to tyranny pursue:
You lay commands both cruel and unjust,
To serve my rival, and betray my trust.
Ind. You first betray'd your trust in loving me:
And should not I my own advantage see?
Serving my love, you may my friendship gain;
You know the rest of your pretences vain.
You must, my Arimant, you must be kind:
'Tis in your nature, and your noble mind.
Arim. I'll to the king, and straight my trust resign.
Ind. His trust you may, but you shall never mine.
Heaven made you love me for no other end,
But to become my confidant and friend:
As such, I keep no secret from your sight,
And therefore make you judge how ill I write:
Read it, and tell me freely then your mind,
If 'tis indited, as I meant it, kind.
Arim. *I ask not heaven my freedom to restore*—[Reading.
But only for your sake——I'll read no more.
And yet I must——
Less for my own, than for your sorrow sad——[Reading.
Another line like this, would make me mad——
Heav'n! she goes on——yet more——and yet more kind!
[*As reading.*
Each sentence is a dagger to my mind.
See me this night————[Reading.
Thank fortune who did such a friend provide;
For faithful Arimant shall be your guide.
Not only to be made an instrument,
But preengaged without my own consent!
Ind. Unknown t'engage you, still augments my score,
And gives you scope of meriting the more.
Arim. The best of men
Some int'rest in their actions must confess;
None merit, but in hope they may possess:

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The fatal paper rather let me tear,
Than, like Bellerophon, my own sentence bear.
Ind. You may; but 'twill not be your best advice:
'Twill only give me pains of writing twice.
You know you must obey me, soon or late:
Why should you vainly struggle with your fate?
Arim. I thank thee, heav'n! thou hast been wondrous kind!
Why am I thus to slavery design'd,
And yet am cheated with a free-born mind!
Or make thy orders with my reason suit,
Or let me live by sense, a glorious brute——[*She frowns.*
You frown, and I obey with speed, before
That dreadful sentence comes, *See me no more.*

In this scene, every circumstance concurs to turn tragedy to farce. The wild absurdity of the expedient; the contemptible subjection of the lover; the folly of obliging him to read the letter, only because it ought to have been concealed from him; the frequent interruptions of amorous impatience; the faint expostulations of a voluntary slave; the imperious haughtiness of a tyrant without power; the deep reflection of the yielding rebel upon fate and free-will; and his wise wish to lose his reason as soon as he finds himself about to do what he cannot persuade his reason to approve, are surely sufficient to awaken the most torpid risibility.

There is scarce a tragedy of the last century which has not debased its most important incidents, and polluted its most serious interlocutions, with buffoonery and meanness; but though, perhaps, it cannot be pretended that the present age has added much to the force and efficacy of the drama, it has at least been able to escape many faults, which either ignorance had overlooked, or indulgence had licensed. The later tragedies, indeed, have faults of another kind, perhaps more destructive to delight, though less open to censure. That perpetual tumour of phrase with which every thought is now expressed by every personage, the paucity of adventures which regularity admits, and the unvaried equality of flowing dialogue, has taken

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away from our present writers almost all that dominion over the passions which was the boast of their predecessors. Yet they may at least claim this commendation, that they avoid gross faults, and that if they cannot often move terrour or pity, they are always careful not to provoke laughter.

N°. 126. SATURDAY, JUNE 1, 1751.

——Nihil est aliud magnum quam multa minuta. VET. AUCT.
Sands form the mountain, moments make the year. YOUNG.

TO THE RAMBLER.

SIR,

AMONG other topicks of conversation which your papers supply, I was lately engaged in a discussion of the character given by Tranquilla of her lover Venustulus, whom, notwithstanding the severity of his mistress, the greater number seemed inclined to acquit of unmanly or culpable timidity.

One of the company remarked that prudence ought to be distinguished from fear; and that if Venustulus was afraid of nocturnal adventures, no man who considered how much every avenue of the town was infested with robbers could think him blameable; for why should life be hazarded without prospect of honour or advantage? Another was of opinion, that a brave man might be afraid of crossing the river in the calmest weather, and declared, that, for his part, while there were coaches and a bridge, he would never be seen tottering in a wooden case, out of which he might be thrown by any irregular agitation, or which might be overset by accident, or negligence, or by the force of a sudden gust, or the rush of a larger vessel. It was his custom, he said, to keep the security of daylight, and dry ground; for it was a maxim with him, that no wise man ever perished by water, or was lost in the dark.

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The next was humbly of opinion, that if Tranquilla had seen, like him, the cattle run roaring about the meadows in the hot months, she would not have thought meanly of her lover for not venturing his safety among them. His neighbour then told us, that for his part he was not ashamed to confess, that he could not see a rat, though it was dead, without palpitation; that he had been driven six times out of his lodgings either by rats or mice; and that he always had a bed in the closet for his servant, whom he called up whenever the enemy was in motion. Another wondered that any man should think himself disgraced by a precipitate retreat from a dog; for there was always a possibility that a dog might be mad; and that surely, though there was no danger but of being bit by a fierce animal, there was more wisdom in flight than contest. By all these declarations another was encouraged to confess, that if he had been admitted to the honour of paying his addresses to Tranquilla, he should have been likely to incur the same censure; for, among all the animals upon which nature has impressed deformity and horrour, there is none whom he durst not encounter rather than a beetle.

Thus, sir, though cowardice is universally defined too close and anxious an attention to personal safety, there will be found scarcely any fear, however excessive in its degree, or unreasonable in its object, which will be allowed to characterize a coward. Fear is a passion which every man feels so frequently predominant in his own breast, that he is unwilling to hear it censured with great asperity; and, perhaps, if we confess the truth, the same restraint which would hinder a man from declaiming against the frauds of any employment among those who profess it, should withhold him from treating fear with contempt among human beings.

Yet, since fortitude is one of those virtues which the condition of our nature makes hourly necessary, I think you cannot better direct your admonitions than against superfluous and panick terrours. Fear is implanted in us

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as a preservative from evil; but its duty, like that of other passions, is not to overbear reason, but to assist it; nor should it be suffered to tyrannise in the imagination, to raise phantoms of horrour, or beset life with supernumerary distresses.

To be always afraid of losing life is, indeed, scarcely to enjoy a life that can deserve the care of preservation. He that once indulges idle fears will never be at rest. Our present state admits only of a kind of negative security; we must conclude ourselves safe when we see no danger, or none inadequate to our powers of opposition. Death, indeed, continually hovers about us, but hovers commonly unseen, unless we sharpen our sight by useless curiosity.

There is always a point at which caution, however solicitous, must limit its preservatives, because one terrour often counteracts another. I once knew one of the speculatists of cowardice, whose reigning disturbance was the dread of housebreakers. His inquiries were for nine years employed upon the best method of barring a window, or a door; and many an hour as he spent in establishing the preference of a bolt to a lock. He had at last, by the daily superaddition of new expedients, contrived a door which could never be forced; for one bar was secured by another with such intricacy of subordination, that he was himself not always able to disengage them in the proper method. He was happy in this fortification, till being asked how he would escape if he was threatened by fire, he discovered, that with all his care and expense, he had only been assisting his own destruction. He then immediately tore off his bolts, and now leaves at night, his outer door half-locked, that he may not by his own folly perish in the flames.

There is one species of terrour which those who are unwilling to suffer the reproach of cowardice have wisely dignified with the name of *antipathy*. A man who talks with intrepidity of the monsters of the wilderness while they are out of sight, will readily confess his antipathy to

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a mole, a weasel, or a frog. He has, indeed, no dread of harm from an insect or a worm, but his antipathy turns him pale whenever they approach him. He believes that a boat will transport him with as much safety as his neighbours, but he cannot conquer his antipathy to the water. Thus he goes on without any reproach from his own reflections, and every day multiplies antipathies, till he becomes contemptible to others, and burdensome to himself.

It is, indeed, certain, that impressions of dread may sometimes be unluckily made by objects not in themselves justly formidable; but when fear is discovered to be groundless, it is to be eradicated like other false opinions, and antipathies are generally superable by a single effort. He that has been taught to shudder at a mouse, if he can persuade himself to risk one encounter, will find his own superiority, and exchange his terrours for the pride of conquest.

I am, sir, &c.

THRASO.

SIR,

As you profess to extend your regard to the minuteness of decency, as well as to the dignity of science, I cannot forbear to lay before you a mode of persecution by which I have been exiled to taverns and coffee-houses, and deterred from entering the doors of my friends.

Among the ladies who please themselves with splendid furniture, or elegant entertainment, it is a practice very common, to ask every guest how he likes the carved work of the cornice, or the figures of the tapestry; the china at the table, or the plate on the sideboard: and on all occasions to inquire his opinion of their judgment and their choice. Melania has laid her new watch in the window nineteen times, that she may desire me to look upon it. Calista has an art of dropping her snuffbox by drawing out her handkerchief, that when I pick it up I may admire it; and Fulgentia has conducted me, by mistake, into the wrong room, at every visit I have paid since her picture was put into a new frame.

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I hope, Mr. Rambler, you will inform them, that no man should be denied the privilege of silence, or tortured to false declarations; and that though ladies may justly claim to be exempt from rudeness, they have no right to force unwilling civilities. To please is a laudable and elegant ambition, and is properly rewarded with honest praise; but to seize applause by violence, and call out for commendation, without knowing, or caring to know, whether it be given from conviction, is a species of tyranny by which modesty is oppressed, and sincerity corrupted. The tribute of admiration, thus exacted by impudence and importunity, differs from the respect paid to silent merit, as the plunder of a pirate from the merchant's profit.

I am, &c.

MISOCOLAX.

SIR,

YOUR great predecessor, the Spectator, endeavoured to diffuse among his female readers a desire of knowledge; nor can I charge you, though you do not seem equally attentive to the ladies, with endeavouring to discourage them from any laudable pursuit. But however either he or you may excite our curiosity, you have not yet informed us how it may be gratified. The world seems to have formed an universal conspiracy against our understandings; our questions are supposed not to expect answers, our arguments are confuted with a jest, and we are treated like beings who transgress the limits of our nature whenever we aspire to seriousness or improvement.

I inquired yesterday of a gentleman eminent for astronomical skill, what made the day long in summer, and short in winter; and was told that nature protracted the days in summer, lest ladies should want time to walk in the park; and the nights in winter, lest they should not have hours sufficient to spend at the card-table.

I hope you do not doubt but I heard such information with just contempt, and I desire you to discover to this great master of ridicule, that I was far from wanting any

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intelligence which he could have given me. I asked the question with no other intention than to set him free from the necessity of silence, and give him an opportunity of mingling on equal terms with a polite assembly, from which, however uneasy, he could not then escape, by a kind introduction of the only subject on which I believed him able to speak with propriety.

I am, &c.

GENEROSA.

N°. 127. TUESDAY, JUNE 4, 1751.

Cœpisti melius, quam desinis. Ultima primis
Cedunt: dissimiles hic vir, et ille puer. OVID. Ep. ix. 24.

Succeeding years thy early fame destroy;
Thou, who began'st a man, wilt end a boy.

POLITIAN, a name eminent among the restorers of polite literature, when he published a collection of epigrams, prefixed to many of them the year of his age at which they were composed. He might design, by this information, either to boast the early maturity of his genius, or to conciliate indulgence to the puerility of his performances. But whatever was his intent, it is remarked by Scaliger, that he very little promoted his own reputation, because he fell below the promise which his first productions had given, and, in the latter part of his life, seldom equalled the sallies of his youth.

It is not uncommon for those who, at their first entrance into the world, were distinguished for attainments or abilities, to disappoint the hopes which they had raised, and to end in neglect and obscurity that life which they began in celebrity and honour. To the long catalogue of the inconveniencies of old age, which moral and satirical writers have so copiously displayed, may be often added the loss of fame.

The advance of the human mind towards any object of laudable pursuit, may be compared to the progress of a

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body driven by a blow. It moves, for a time, with great velocity and vigour, but the force of the first impulse is perpetually decreasing, and though it should encounter no obstacle capable of quelling it by a sudden stop, the resistance of the medium through which it passes, and the latent inequalities of the smoothest surface, will, in a short time, by continued retardation, wholly overpower it. Some hindrances will be found in every road of life, but he that fixes his eyes upon any thing at a distance, necessarily loses sight of all that fills up the intermediate space, and therefore sets forward with alacrity and confidence, nor suspects a thousand obstacles, by which he afterwards finds his passage embarrassed and obstructed. Some are indeed stopt at once in their career by a sudden shock of calamity, or diverted to a different direction by the cross impulse of some violent passion; but far the greater part languish by slow degrees, deviate at first into slight obliquities, and themselves scarcely perceive at what time their ardour forsook them, or when they lost sight of their original design.

Weariness and negligence are perpetually prevailing by silent encroachments, assisted by different causes, and not observed till they cannot, without great difficulty, be opposed. Labour necessarily requires pauses of ease and relaxation, and the deliciousness of ease commonly makes us unwilling to return to labour. We, perhaps, prevail upon ourselves to renew our attempts, but eagerly listen to every argument for frequent interpositions of amusement; for, when indolence has once entered upon the mind, it can scarcely be dispossessed but by such efforts as very few are willing to exert.

It is the fate of industry to be equally endangered by miscarriage and success, by confidence and despondency. He that engages in a great undertaking, with a false opinion of its facility, or too high conceptions of his own strength, is easily discouraged by the first hindrance of his advances, because he had promised himself an equal and perpetual progression without impediment or disturbance; when un-

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expected interruptions break in upon him, he is in the state of a man surprised by a tempest, where he proposed only to bask in the calm, or sport in the shallows.

It is not only common to find the difficulty of an enterprise greater, but the profit less, than hope had pictured it. Youth enters the world with very happy prejudices in her own favour. She imagines herself not only certain of accomplishing every adventure, but of obtaining those rewards which the accomplishment may deserve. She is not easily persuaded to believe that the force of merit can be resisted by obstinacy and avarice, or its lustre darkened by envy and malignity. She has not yet learned that the most evident claims to praise or preferment may be rejected by malice against conviction, or by indolence without examination; that they may be sometimes defeated by artifices, and sometimes overborne by clamour; that, in the mingled numbers of mankind, many need no other provocation to enmity than that they find themselves excelled; that others have ceased their curiosity, and consider every man who fills the mouth of report with a new name, as an intruder upon their retreat, and disturber of their repose; that some are engaged in complications of interest which they imagine endangered by every innovation; that many yield themselves up implicitly to every report which hatred disseminates or folly scatters; and that whoever aspires to the notice of the publick, has in almost every man an enemy and a rival; and must struggle with the opposition of the daring, and elude the stratagems of the timorous, must quicken the frigid and soften the obdurate, must reclaim perverseness and inform stupidity.

It is no wonder that when the prospect of reward has vanished, the zeal of enterprise should cease; for who would persevere to cultivate the soil which he has, after long labour, discovered to be barren? He who hath pleased himself with anticipated praises, and expected that he should meet in every place with patronage or friendship, will soon remit his vigour, when he finds that, from those who desire to be considered as his admirers, nothing can

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be hoped but cold civility, and that many refuse to own his excellence, lest they should be too justly expected to reward it.

A man, thus cut off from the prospect of that port to which his address and fortitude had been employed to steer him, often abandons himself to chance and to the wind, and glides careless and idle down the current of life, without resolution to make another effort, till he is swallowed up by the gulf of mortality.

Others are betrayed to the same desertion of themselves by a contrary fallacy. It was said of Hannibal, that he wanted nothing to the completion of his martial virtues, but that when he had gained a victory he should know how to use it. The folly of desisting too soon from successful labours, and the haste of enjoying advantages before they are secured, are often fatal to men of impetuous desire, to men whose consciousness of uncommon powers fills them with presumption, and who, having borne opposition down before them, and left emulation panting behind, are early persuaded to imagine that they have reached the heights of perfection, and that now, being no longer in danger from competitors, they may pass the rest of their days in the enjoyment of their acquisitions, in contemplation of their own superiority, and in attention to their own praises, and look unconcerned from their eminence upon the toils and contentions of meaner beings.

It is not sufficiently considered in the hour of exultation, that all human excellence is comparative; that no man performs much but in proportion to what others accomplish, or to the time and opportunities which have been allowed him; and that he who stops at any point of excellence is every day sinking in estimation, because his improvement grows continually more incommensurate to his life. Yet, as no man willingly quits opinions favourable to himself, they who have once been justly celebrated, imagine that they still have the same pretensions to regard, and seldom perceive the diminution of their character while there is time to recover it. Nothing then remains but murmurs and re-

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morse; for if the spendthrift's poverty be imbittered by the reflection that he once was rich, how must the idler's obscurity be clouded by remembering that he once had lustre!

These errours all arise from an original mistake of the true motives of action. He that never extends his view beyond the praises or rewards of men will be dejected by neglect and envy, or infatuated by honours and applause. But the consideration that life is only deposited in his hands to be employed in obedience to a master who will regard his endeavours, not his success, would have preserved him from trivial elations and discouragements, and enabled him to proceed with constancy and cheerfulness, neither enervated by commendation, nor intimidated by censure.

N°. 128. SATURDAY, JUNE 8, 1751.

Αἰὼν δ' ἀσφαλὴς
Οὐκ ἔγενετ', οὔτ' Αἰακίδᾳ παρὰ Πηλεῖ,
Οὔτε παρ' ἀντιθέῳ
Κάδμῳ· λέγονται μὰν βρότων
Ὄλβον ὑπέρτατον οἳ
Σχεῖν. PIND. Py. iii. 153.

For not the brave, or wise, or great,
E'er yet had happiness complete:
Nor Peleus, grandson of the sky,
Nor Cadmus, scap'd the shafts of pain,
Though favour'd by the pow'rs on high,
With ev'ry bliss that man can gain.

THE writers who have undertaken the task of reconciling mankind to their present state, and relieving the discontent produced by the various distribution of terrestrial advantages, frequently remind us that we judge too hastily of good and evil, that we view only the superfices of life, and determine of the whole by a very small part; and that in the condition of men it frequently happens, that grief and anxiety lie hid under the golden robes of prosperity, and the gloom of calamity is cheered by secret radiations

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of hope and comfort; as in the works of nature the bog is sometimes covered with flowers, and the mine concealed in the barren crags.

None but those who have learned the art of subjecting their senses as well as reason to hypothetical systems, can be persuaded by the most specious rhetorician that the lots of life are equal; yet it cannot be denied that every one has his peculiar pleasures and vexations, that external accidents operate variously upon different minds, and that no man can exactly judge from his own sensations, what another would feel in the same circumstances.

If the general disposition of things be estimated by the representation which every one makes of his own estate, the world must be considered as the abode of sorrow and misery; for how few can forbear to relate their troubles and distresses? If we judge by the account which may be obtained of every man's fortune from others, it may be concluded, that we all are placed in an elysian region, overspread with the luxuriance of plenty, and fanned by the breezes of felicity; since scarcely any complaint is uttered without censure from those that hear it, and almost all are allowed to have obtained a provision at least adequate to their virtue or their understanding, to possess either more than they deserve, or more than they enjoy.

We are either born with such dissimilitude of temper and inclination, or receive so many of our ideas and opinions from the state of life in which we are engaged, that the griefs and cares of one part of mankind seem to the other hypocrisy, folly, and affectation. Every class of society has its cant of lamentation, which is understood or regarded by none but themselves; and every part of life has its uneasiness, which those who do not feel them will not commiserate. An event which spreads distraction over half the commercial world, assembles the trading companies in councils and committees, and shakes the nerves of a thousand stockjobbers, is read by the landlord and the farmer with frigid indifference. An affair of love, which fills the young breast with incessant alternations of hope

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and fear, and steals away the night and day from every other pleasure or employment, is regarded by them whose passions time has extinguished, as an amusement, which can properly raise neither joy nor sorrow, and, though it may be suffered to fill the vacuity of an idle moment, should always give way to prudence or interest.

He that never had any other desire than to fill a chest with money, or to add another manor to his estate, who never grieved but at a bad mortgage, or entered a company but to make a bargain, would be astonished to hear of beings known among the polite and gay by the denomination of wits. How would he gape with curiosity, or grin with contempt, at the mention of beings who have no wish but to speak what was never spoken before; who, if they happen to inherit wealth, often exhaust their patrimonies in treating those who will hear them talk; and if they are poor, neglect opportunities of improving their fortunes, for the pleasure of making others laugh? How slowly would he believe that there are men who would rather lose a legacy than the reputation of a distich; who think it less disgrace to want money than repartee; whom the vexation of having been foiled in a contest of raillery is sometimes sufficient to deprive of sleep; and who would esteem it a lighter evil to miss a profitable bargain by some accidental delay, than not to have thought of a smart reply till the time of producing it was past? How little would he suspect that this child of idleness and frolick enters every assembly with a beating bosom, like a litigant on the day of decision, and revolves the probability of applause with the anxiety of a conspirator, whose fate depends upon the next night; that at the hour of retirement he carries home, under a show of airy negligence, a heart lacerated with envy, or depressed with disappointment; and immures himself in his closet, that he may disencumber his memory at leisure, review the progress of the day, state with accuracy his loss or gain of reputation, and examine the causes of his failure or success?

Yet more remote from common conceptions are the nu-

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merous and restless anxieties, by which female happiness is particularly disturbed. A solitary philosopher would imagine ladies born with an exemption from care and sorrow, lulled in perpetual quiet, and feasted with unmingled pleasure; for what can interrupt the content of those, upon whom one age has laboured after another to confer honours, and accumulate immunities; those to whom rudeness is infamy, and insult is cowardice; whose eye commands the brave, and whose smiles soften the severe; whom the sailor travels to adorn, the soldier bleeds to defend, and the poet wears out life to celebrate; who claim tribute from every art and science, and for whom all who approach them endeavour to multiply delights, without requiring from them any return but willingness to be pleased?

Surely, among these favourites of nature, thus unacquainted with toil and danger, felicity must have fixed her residence; they must know only the changes of more vivid or more gentle joys: their life must always move either to the slow or sprightly melody of the lyre of gladness; they can never assemble but to pleasure, or retire but to peace.

Such would be the thoughts of every man who should hover at a distance round the world, and know it only by conjecture and speculation. But experience will soon discover how easily those are disgusted who have been made nice by plenty and tender by indulgence. He will soon see to how many dangers power is exposed which has no other guard than youth and beauty, and how easily that tranquillity is molested which can only be soothed with the songs of flattery. It is impossible to supply wants as fast as an idle imagination may be able to form them, or to remove all inconveniencies by which elegance refined into impatience may be offended. None are so hard to please, as those whom satiety of pleasure makes weary of themselves; nor any so readily provoked as those who have been always courted with an emulation of civility.

There are, indeed, some strokes which the envy of fate aims immediately at the fair. The mistress of Catullus wept for her sparrow many centuries ago, and lapdogs will

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be sometimes sick in the present age. The most fashionable brocade is subject to stains; a pinner, the pride of Brussels, may be torn by a careless washer; a picture may drop from a watch; or the triumph of a new suit may be interrupted on the first day of its enjoyment, and all distinctions of dress unexpectedly obliterated by a general mourning.

Such is the state of every age, every sex, and every condition: all have their cares, either from nature or from folly: and whoever, therefore, finds himself inclined to envy another, should remember that he knows not the real condition which he desires to obtain, but is certain that by indulging a vitious passion, he must lessen that happiness which he thinks already too sparingly bestowed.

N°. 129. TUESDAY, JUNE 11, 1751.

———*Nunc, O nunc, Dædale, dixit,*
Materiam, qua sis ingeniosus, habes.
Possidet in terras, et possidet æquora, Minos:
Nec tellus nostræ, nec patet unda fugæ.
Restat iter cœlo: cœlo tentabimus ire.
Da veniam cœpto, Jupiter alte, meo. OVID. Art. Am. Lib. ii. 33.

Now, Dædalus, behold, by fate assign'd,
A task proportion'd to thy mighty mind!
Unconquer'd bars on earth and sea withstand;
Thine, Minos, is the main, and thine the land.
The skies are open—let us try the skies:
Forgive, great Jove, the daring enterprise.

MORALISTS, like other writers, instead of casting their eyes abroad in the living world, and endeavouring to form maxims of practice and new hints of theory, content their curiosity with that secondary knowledge which books afford, and think themselves entitled to reverence by a new arrangement of an ancient system, or new illustration of established principles[e]. The sage precepts

[e] Johnson gained *his* knowledge from actual experience. He told Boswell that before he wrote the Rambler, he had been running about the world more than almost any body. Boswell's Life of Johnson, vol. i. p. 196; and vol. iii. pp. 20, 21.

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of the first instructers of the world are transmitted from age to age with little variation, and echoed from one author to another, not, perhaps, without some loss of their original force at every repercussion.

I know not whether any other reason than this idleness of imitation can be assigned for that uniform and constant partiality, by which some vices have hitherto escaped censure, and some virtues wanted recommendation; nor can I discover why else we have been warned only against part of our enemies, while the rest have been suffered to steal upon us without notice; why the heart has on one side been doubly fortified, and laid open on the other to the incursions of errour, and the ravages of vice.

Among the favourite topicks of moral declamation, may be numbered the miscarriages of imprudent boldness, and the folly of attempts beyond our power. Every page of every philosopher is crowded with examples of temerity that sunk under burdens which she laid upon herself, and called out enemies to battle by whom she was destroyed.

These remarks are too just to be disputed, and too salutary to be rejected; but there is likewise some danger lest timorous prudence should be inculcated, till courage and enterprise are wholly repressed, and the mind congealed in perpetual inactivity by the fatal influence of frigorifick wisdom.

Every man should, indeed, carefully compare his force with his undertaking; for though we ought not to live only for our own sakes, and though, therefore, danger or difficulty should not be avoided merely because we may expose ourselves to misery or disgrace; yet it may be justly required of us, not to throw away our lives upon inadequate and hopeless designs, since we might, by a just estimate of our abilities, become more useful to mankind.

There is an irrational contempt of danger, which approaches nearly to the folly, if not the guilt of suicide; there is a ridiculous perseverance in impracticable schemes, which is justly punished with ignominy and reproach. But in the wide regions of probability, which are the

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proper province of prudence and election, there is always room to deviate on either side of rectitude without rushing against apparent absurdity; and according to the inclinations of nature, or the impressions of precept, the daring and the cautious may move in different directions without touching upon rashness or cowardice.

That there is a middle path, which it is every man's duty to find, and to keep, is unanimously confessed: but it is likewise acknowledged, that this middle path is so narrow, that it cannot easily be discovered, and so little beaten, that there are no certain marks by which it can be followed: the care, therefore, of all those who conduct others has been, that whenever they decline into obliquities, they should tend towards the side of safety.

It can, indeed, raise no wonder that temerity has been generally censured; for it is one of the vices with which few can be charged, and which, therefore, great numbers are ready to condemn. It is the vice of noble and generous minds, the exuberance of magnanimity, and the ebullition of genius; and is, therefore, not regarded with much tenderness, because it never flatters us by that appearance of softness and imbecility which is commonly necessary to conciliate compassion. But if the same attention had been applied to the search of arguments against the folly of presupposing impossibilities, and anticipating frustration, I know not whether many would not have been roused to usefulness, who, having been taught to confound prudence with timidity, never ventured to excel, lest they should unfortunately fail.

It is necessary to distinguish our own interest from that of others, and that distinction will, perhaps, assist us in fixing the just limits of caution and adventurousness. In an undertaking that involves the happiness or the safety of many, we have certainly no right to hazard more than is allowed by those who partake the danger; but where only ourselves can suffer by miscarriage, we are not confined within such narrow limits; and still less is the reproach of temerity, when numbers will receive

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advantage by success, and only one be incommoded by failure.

Men are generally willing to hear precepts by which ease is favoured; and as no resentment is raised by general representations of human folly, even in those who are most eminently jealous of comparative reputation, we confess, without reluctance, that vain man is ignorant of his own weakness, and therefore frequently presumes to attempt what he can never accomplish; but it ought likewise to be remembered, that man is no less ignorant of his own powers, and might perhaps have accomplished a thousand designs, which the prejudices of cowardice restrained him from attempting.

It is observed in the golden verses of Pythagoras, that "Power is never far from necessity." The vigour of the human mind quickly appears, when there is no longer any place for doubt and hesitation, when diffidence is absorbed in the sense of danger, or overwhelmed by some resistless passion. We then soon discover, that difficulty is, for the most part, the daughter of idleness, that the obstacles with which our way seemed to be obstructed were only phantoms, which we believed real, because we durst not advance to a close examination; and we learn that it is impossible to determine without experience how much constancy may endure, or perseverance perform.

But whatever pleasure may be found in the review of distresses when art or courage has surmounted them, few will be persuaded to wish that they may be awakened by want, or terrour, to the conviction of their own abilities. Every one should therefore endeavour to invigorate himself by reason and reflection, and determine to exert the latent force that nature may have reposed in him, before the hour of exigence comes upon him, and compulsion shall torture him to diligence. It is below the dignity of a reasonable being to owe that strength to necessity which ought always to act at the call of choice, or to need any other motive to industry than the desire of performing his duty.

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Reflections that may drive away despair, cannot be wanting to him who considers how much life is now advanced beyond the state of naked, undisciplined, uninstructed nature. Whatever has been effected for convenience or elegance, while it was yet unknown, was believed impossible; and therefore would never have been attempted, had not some, more daring than the rest, adventured to bid defiance to prejudice and censure. Nor is there yet any reason to doubt that the same labour would be rewarded with the same success. There are qualities in the products of nature yet undiscovered, and combinations in the powers of art yet untried. It is the duty of every man to endeavour that something may be added by his industry to the hereditary aggregate of knowledge and happiness. To add much can indeed be the lot of few, but to add something, however little, every one may hope; and of every honest endeavour, it is certain, that, however unsuccessful, it will be at last rewarded.

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N°. 130. SATURDAY, JUNE 15, 1751.

Non sic prata novo vere decentia
Æstatis calidæ dispoliat vapor:
Sævit solstitio cum medius dies;——
Ut fulgor teneris qui radiat genis
Momento rapitur! nullaque non dies
Formosi spolium corporis abstulit.
Res est forma fugax. Quis sapiens bono
Confidat fragili? SENECA, Hippol. act. ii. 764.

Not faster in the summer's ray
The spring's frail beauty fades away,
Than anguish and decay consume
The smiling virgin's rosy bloom.
Some beauty's snatch'd each day, each hour;
For beauty is a fleeting flow'r:
Then how can wisdom e'er confide
In beauty's momentary pride? ELPHINSTO.

TO THE RAMBLER.

SIR,

YOU have very lately observed that in the numerous subdivisions of the world, every class and order of mankind have joys and sorrows of their own; we all feel hourly pain and pleasure from events which pass unheeded before other eyes, but can scarcely communicate our perceptions to minds preoccupied by different objects, any more than the delight of well-disposed colours or harmonious sounds can be imparted to such as want the senses of hearing or of sight.

I am so strongly convinced of the justness of this remark, and have on so many occasions discovered with how little attention pride looks upon calamity, of which she thinks herself not in danger, and indolence listens to complaint when it is not echoed by her own remembrance, that though I am about to lay the occurrences of my life before you, I question whether you will condescend to peruse my narrative, or, without the help of some female speculatists, be able to understand it.

I was born a beauty. From the dawn of reason I had

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my regard turned wholly upon myself, nor can recollect any thing earlier than praise and admiration. My mother, whose face had luckily advanced her to a condition above her birth, thought no evil so great as deformity. She had not the power of imagining any other defect than a cloudy complexion, or disproportionate features; and, therefore, contemplated me as an assemblage of all that could raise envy or desire, and predicted with the triumphant fondness extent of my conquests, and the number of my slaves.

She never mentioned any of my young acquaintance before me, but to remark how much they fell below my perfection; how one would have had a fine face, but that her eyes were without lustre; how another struck the sight at a distance, but wanted my hair and teeth at a nearer view; another disgraced an elegant shape with a brown skin; some had short fingers, and others dimples in a wrong place.

As she expected no happiness nor advantage but from beauty, she thought nothing but beauty worthy of her care; and her maternal kindness was chiefly exercised in contrivances to protect me from any accident that might deface me with a scar, or stain me with a freckle: she never thought me sufficiently shaded from the sun, or screened from the fire. She was severe or indulgent with no other intention than the preservation of my form; she excused me from work, lest I should learn to hang down my head, or harden my finger with a needle; she snatched away my book, because a young lady in the neighbourhood had made her eyes red with reading by a candle; but she would scarcely suffer me to eat, lest I should spoil my shape, nor to walk, lest I should swell my ancle with a sprain. At night I was accurately surveyed from head to foot, lest I should have suffered any diminution of my charms in the adventures of the day: and was never permitted to sleep, till I had passed through the cosmetick discipline, part of which was a regular lustration performed with bean-flower water and May-dews; my hair was perfumed with variety of unguents, by some of which it was to be thickened, and

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by others to be curled. The softness of my hands was secured by medicated gloves, and my bosom rubbed with a pomade prepared by my mother, of virtue to discuss pimples and clear discolorations.

I was always called up early, because the morning air gives a freshness to the cheeks: but I was placed behind a curtain in my mother's chamber, because the neck is easily tanned by the rising sun. I was then dressed with a thousand precautions, and again heard my own praises, and triumphed in the compliments and prognostications of all that approached me.

My mother was not so much prepossessed with an opinion of my natural excellencies as not to think some cultivation necessary to their completion. She took care that I should want none of the accomplishments included in female education, or considered necessary in fashionable life. I was looked upon in my ninth year as the chief ornament of the dancing-master's ball; and Mr. Ariet used to reproach his other scholars with my performances on the harpsichord. At twelve I was remarkable for playing my cards with great elegance of manner, and accuracy of judgment.

At last the time came when my mother thought me perfect in my exercises, and qualified to display in the open world those accomplishments which had yet only been discovered in select parties, or domestick assemblies. Preparations were therefore made for my appearance on a publick night, which she considered as the most important and critical moment of my life. She cannot be charged with neglecting any means of recommendation, or leaving any thing to chance which prudence could ascertain. Every ornament was tried in every position, every friend was consulted about the colour of my dress, and the mantua-makers were harassed with directions and alterations.

At last the night arrived from which my future life was to be reckoned. I was dressed and sent out to conquer, with a heart beating like that of an old knight-errant at his first sally. Scholars have told me of a Spartan matron,

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who, when she armed her son for battle, bade him bring back his shield, or be brought upon it. My venerable parent dismissed me to a field, in her opinion of equal glory, with a command to show that I was her daughter, and not to return without a lover.

I went, and was received like other pleasing novelties with a tumult of applause. Every man who valued himself upon the graces of his person, or the elegance of his address, crowded about me, and wit and splendour contended for my notice. I was delightfully fatigued with incessant civilities, which were made more pleasing by the apparent envy of those whom my presence exposed to neglect, and returned with an attendant equal in rank and wealth to my utmost wishes, and from this time stood in the first rank of beauty, was followed by gazers in the Mall, celebrated in the papers of the day, imitated by all who endeavoured to rise into fashion, and censured by those whom age or disappointment forced to retire.

My mother, who pleased herself with the hopes of seeing my exaltation, dressed me with all the exuberance of finery; and when I represented to her that a fortune might be expected proportionate to my appearance, told me that she should scorn the reptile who could inquire after the fortune of a girl like me. She advised me to prosecute my victories, and time would certainly bring me a captive who might deserve the honour of being enchained for ever.

My lovers were indeed so numerous, that I had no other care than that of determining to whom I should seem to give the preference. But having been steadily and industriously instructed to preserve my heart from any impressions which might hinder me from consulting my interest, I acted with less embarrassment, because my choice was regulated by principles more clear and certain than the caprice of approbation. When I had singled out one from the rest as more worthy of encouragement, I proceeded in my measures by the rules of art; and yet when the ardour of the first visits was spent, generally found a

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sudden declension of my influence; I felt in myself the want of some power to diversify amusement, and enliven conversation, and could not but suspect that my mind failed in performing the promises of my face. This opinion was soon confirmed by one of my lovers, who married Lavinia with less beauty and fortune than mine, because he thought a wife ought to have qualities which might make her amiable when her bloom was past.

The vanity of my mother would not suffer her to discover any defect in one that had been formed by her instructions, and had all the excellence which she herself could boast. She told me that nothing so much hindered the advancement of women as literature and wit, which generally frightened away those that could make the best settlements, and drew about them a needy tribe of poets and philosophers, that filled their heads with wild notions of content, and contemplation, and virtuous obscurity. She therefore enjoined me to improve my minuet-step with a new French dancing-master, and wait the event of the next birth-night.

I had now almost completed my nineteenth year: if my charms had lost any of their softness, it was more than compensated by additional dignity; and if the attractions of innocence were impaired, their place was supplied by the arts of allurement. I was, therefore, preparing for a new attack, without any abatement of my confidence, when, in the midst of my hopes and schemes, I was seized by that dreadful malady which has so often put a sudden end to the tyranny of beauty. I recovered my health after a long confinement; but when I looked again on that face which had been often flushed with transport at its own reflection, and saw all that I had learned to value, all that I had endeavoured to improve, all that had procured me honours or praises, irrecoverably destroyed, I sunk at once into melancholy and despondence. My pain was not much consoled or alleviated by my mother, who grieved that I had not lost my life together with my beauty; and declared, that she thought a young woman divested of her

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charms had nothing for which those who loved her could desire to save her from the grave.

Having thus continued my relation to the period from which my life took a new course, I shall conclude it in another letter, if, by publishing this, you show any regard for the correspondence of,

Sir, &c.

VICTORIA.

N°. 131. TUESDAY, JUNE 18, 1751.

———*Fatis accede, Deisque,*
Et cole felices, miseros fuge. Sidera terra
Ut distant, et flamma mari, sic utile recto. LUCAN. Lib. viii. 486.

Still follow where auspicious fates invite;
Caress the happy, and the wretched slight.
Sooner shall jarring elements unite,
Than truth with gain, than interest with right. F. LEWIS.

THERE is scarcely any sentiment in which, amidst the innumerable varieties of inclination that nature or accident have scattered in the world, we find greater numbers concurring, than in the wish for riches; a wish, indeed, so prevalent that it may be considered as universal and transcendental, as the desire in which all other desires are included, and of which the various purposes which actuate mankind are only subordinate species and different modifications.

Wealth is the general centre of inclination, the point to which all minds preserve an invariable tendency, and from which they afterwards diverge in numberless directions. Whatever is the remote or ultimate design, the immediate care is to be rich; and in whatever enjoyment we intend finally to acquiesce, we seldom consider it as attainable but by the means of money. Of wealth, therefore, all unanimously confess the value, nor is there any disagreement but about the use.

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No desire can be formed which riches do not assist to gratify. He that places his happiness in splendid equipage or numerous dependents, in refined praise or popular acclamations, in the accumulation of curiosities or the revels of luxury, in splendid edifices or wide plantations, must still, either by birth or acquisition, possess riches. They may be considered as the elemental principles of pleasure, which may be combined with endless diversity; as the essential and necessary substance, of which only the form is left to be adjusted by choice.

The necessity of riches being thus apparent, it is not wonderful that almost every mind has been employed in endeavours to acquire them; that multitudes have vied in arts by which life is furnished with accommodations, and which, therefore, mankind may reasonably be expected to reward.

It had, indeed, been happy, if this predominant appetite had operated only in concurrence with virtue, by influencing none but those who were zealous to deserve what they were eager to possess, and had abilities to improve their own fortunes by contributing to the ease or happiness of others. To have riches and to have merit would then have been the same, and success might reasonably have been considered as a proof of excellence.

But we do not find that any of the wishes of men keep a stated proportion to their powers of attainment. Many envy and desire wealth, who can never procure it by honest industry or useful knowledge. They, therefore, turn their eyes about to examine what other methods can be found of gaining that which none, however impotent or worthless, will be content to want.

A little inquiry will discover that there are nearer ways to profit than through the intricacies of art, or up the steeps of labour; what wisdom and virtue scarcely receive at the close of life, as the recompense of long toil and repeated efforts, is brought within the reach of subtilty and dishonesty by more expeditious and compendious measures: the wealth of credulity is an open prey to falsehood;

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and the possessions of ignorance and imbecility are easily stolen away by the conveyances of secret artifice, or seized by the gripe of unresisted violence.

It is, likewise, not hard to discover that riches always procure protection for themselves, that they dazzle the eyes of inquiry, divert the celerity of pursuit, or appease the ferocity of vengeance. When any man is incontestably known to have large possessions, very few think it requisite to inquire by what practices they were obtained; the resentment of mankind rages only against the struggles of feeble and timorous corruption, but when it has surmounted the first opposition, it is afterwards supported by favour, and animated by applause.

The prospect of gaining speedily what is ardently desired, and the certainty of obtaining by every accession of advantage an addition of security, have so far prevailed upon the passions of mankind, that the peace of life is destroyed by a general and incessant struggle for riches. It is observed of gold, by an old epigrammatist, that "To have it is to be in fear, and to want it is to be in sorrow." There is no condition which is not disquieted either with the care of gaining or of keeping money; and the race of man may be divided in a political estimate between those who are practising fraud, and those who are repelling it.

If we consider the present state of the world, it will be found, that all confidence is lost among mankind, that no man ventures to act, where money can be endangered upon the faith of another. It is impossible to see the long scrolls in which every contract is included, with all their appendages of seals and attestation, without wondering at the depravity of those beings, who must be restrained from violation of promise by such formal and publick evidences, and precluded from equivocation and subterfuge by such punctilious minuteness. Among all the satires to which folly and wickedness have given occasion, none is equally severe with a bond or a settlement.

Of the various arts by which riches may be obtained, the greater part are at the first view irreconcilable with

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the laws of virtue; some are openly flagitious, and practised not only in neglect, but in defiance of faith and justice; and the rest are on every side so entangled with dubious tendencies, and so beset with perpetual temptations, that very few, even of those who are not yet abandoned, are able to preserve their innocence, or can produce any other claim to pardon than that they have deviated from the right less than others, and have sooner and more diligently endeavoured to return.

One of the chief characteristicks of the golden age, of the age in which neither care nor danger had intruded on mankind, is the community of possessions: strife and fraud were totally excluded, and every turbulent passion was stilled by plenty and equality. Such were, indeed, happy times, but such times can return no more. Community of possession must include spontaneity of production; for what is obtained by labour will be of right the property of him by whose labour it is gained. And while a rightful claim to pleasure or to affluence must be procured either by slow industry or uncertain hazard, there will always be multitudes whom cowardice or impatience incite to more safe and more speedy methods, who strive to pluck the fruit without cultivating the tree, and to share the advantages of victory without partaking the danger of the battle.

In later ages, the conviction of the danger to which virtue is exposed while the mind continues open to the influence of riches, has determined many to vows of perpetual poverty; they have suppressed desire by cutting off the possibility of gratification, and secured their peace by destroying the enemy whom they had no hope of reducing to quiet subjection. But, by debarring themselves from evil, they have rescinded many opportunities of good; they have too often sunk into inactivity and uselessness; and, though they have forborne to injure society, have not fully paid their contributions to its happiness.

While riches are so necessary to present convenience, and so much more easily obtained by crimes than virtues, the mind can only be secured from yielding to the conti-

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nual impulse of covetousness by the preponderation of unchangeable and eternal motives. Gold will turn the intellectual balance, when weighed only against reputation; but will be light and ineffectual when the opposite scale is charged with justice, veracity, and piety[f].

N°. 132. SATURDAY, JUNE 22, 1751.

———*Dociles imitandis*
Turpibus ac pravis omnes sumus.——— Juv. Sat. xiv. 40.

The mind of mortals, in perverseness strong,
Imbibes, with dire docility, the wrong.

TO THE RAMBLER.

MR. RAMBLER,

I WAS bred a scholar, and, after the usual course of education, found it necessary to employ, for the support of life, that learning which I had almost exhausted my little fortune in acquiring. The lucrative professions drew my regard with equal attraction; each presented ideas which excited my curiosity, and each imposed duties which terrified my apprehension.

There is no temper more unpropitious to interest than desultory application and unlimited inquiry, by which the desires are held in a perpetual equipoise, and the mind fluctuates between different purposes, without determination. I had books of every kind round me, among which

[f] Johnson often conversed, as well as wrote, on riches. In his conversations on the subject, amidst his often indulged laxity of talk, there was ever a deep insight into the human heart. "All the arguments," he once, with keen satire, remarked, "which are brought to represent poverty as no evil, show it to be evidently a great evil. You never find people *labouring* to convince you that you may live happily upon a plentiful fortune. So you hear people talking how miserable a king must be, and yet they all wish to be in his place." BOSWELL, vol. i. p. 422.

When Simonides was asked, whether it were better to be wise or rich, he gave an answer in favour of wealth. "For," said he, "I always behold the wise lingering at the gates of the wealthy." Aristot. Rhet. ii. 18.

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I divided my time as caprice or accident directed. I often spent the first hours of the day in considering to what study I should devote the rest, and at last snatched up any author that lay upon the table, or, perhaps, fled to a coffee-house for deliverance from the anxiety of irresolution, and the gloominess of solitude.

Thus my little patrimony grew imperceptibly less, till I was roused from my literary slumber by a creditor, whose importunity obliged me to pacify him with so large a sum, that what remained was not sufficient to support me more than eight months. I hope you will not reproach me with avarice or cowardice, if I acknowledge that I now thought myself in danger of distress, and obliged to endeavour after some certain competence.

There have been heroes of negligence, who have laid the price of their last acre in a drawer, and, without the least interruption of their tranquillity, or abatement of their expenses, taken out one piece after another, till there was no more remaining. But I was not born to such dignity of imprudence, or such exaltation above the cares and necessities of life; I therefore immediately engaged my friends to procure me a little employment, which might set me free from the dread of poverty, and afford me time to plan out some final scheme of lasting advantage.

My friends were struck with honest solicitude, and immediately promised their endeavours for my extrication. They did not suffer their kindness to languish by delay, but prosecuted their inquiries with such success, that in less than a month I was perplexed with variety of offers and contrariety of prospects.

I had, however, no time for long pauses of consideration; and, therefore, soon resolved to accept the office of instructing a young nobleman in the house of his father; I went to the seat at which the family then happened to reside, was received with great politeness, and invited to enter immediately on my charge. The terms offered were such as I should willingly have accepted, though my fortune had allowed me greater liberty of choice: the respect with which

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I was treated, flattered my vanity; and perhaps the splendour of the apartments, and the luxury of the table, were not wholly without their influence. I immediately complied with the proposals, and received the young lord into my care.

Having no desire to gain more than I should truly deserve I very diligently prosecuted my undertaking, and had the satisfaction of discovering in my pupil a flexible temper, a quick apprehension, and a retentive memory. I did not much doubt that my care would, in time, produce a wise and useful counsellor to the state, though my labours were somewhat obstructed by want of authority, and the necessity of complying with the freaks of negligence, and of waiting patiently for the lucky moment of voluntary attention. To a man whose imagination was filled with the dignity of knowledge, and to whom a studious life had made all the common amusements insipid and contemptible, it was not very easy to suppress his indignation, when he saw himself forsaken in the midst of his lecture, for an opportunity to catch an insect, and found his instructions debarred from access to the intellectual faculties, by the memory of a childish frolick, or the desire of a new plaything.

Those vexations would have recurred less frequently, had not his mamma, by entreating at one time that he should be excused from a task as a reward for some petty compliance, and withholding him from his book at another, to gratify herself or her visitants with his vivacity, shown him that every thing was more pleasing and more important than knowledge, and that study was to be endured rather than chosen, and was only the business of those hours which pleasure left vacant, or discipline usurped.

I thought it my duty to complain, in tender terms, of these frequent avocations; but was answered, that rank and fortune might reasonably hope for some indulgence; that the retardation of my pupil's progress would not be imputed to any negligence or inability of mine; and that with the success which satisfied every body else, I might

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surely satisfy myself. I had now done my duty, and without more remonstrances continued to inculcate my precepts whenever they could be heard, gained every day new influence, and found that by degrees my scholar began to feel the quick impulses of curiosity, and the honest ardour of studious ambition.

At length it was resolved to pass a winter in London. The lady had too much fondness for her son to live five months without him, and too high an opinion of his wit and learning to refuse her vanity the gratification of exhibiting him to the publick. I remonstrated against too early an acquaintance with cards and company; but, with a soft contempt of my ignorance and pedantry, she said, that he had been already confined too long to solitary study, and it was now time to show him the world; nothing was more a brand of meanness than bashful timidity; gay freedom and elegant assurance were only to be gained by mixed conversation, a frequent intercourse with strangers, and a timely introduction to splendid assemblies; and she had more than once observed, that his forwardness and complaisance began to desert him, that he was silent when he had not something of consequence to say, blushed whenever he happened to find himself mistaken, and hung down his head in the presence of the ladies, without the readiness of reply, and activity of officiousness, remarkable in young gentlemen that are bred in London.

Again I found resistance hopeless, and again thought it proper to comply. We entered the coach, and in four days were placed in the gayest and most magnificent region of the town. My pupil, who had for several years lived at a remote seat, was immediately dazzled with a thousand beams of novelty and show. His imagination was filled with the perpetual tumult of pleasure that passed before him, and it was impossible to allure him from the window, or to overpower by any charm of eloquence the rattle of coaches, and the sounds which echoed from the doors in the neighbourhood. In three days his attention, which he began to regain, was disturbed by a rich

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suit, in which he was equipped for the reception of company, and which, having been long accustomed to a plain dress, he could not at first survey without ecstasy.

The arrival of the family was now formally notified; every hour of every day brought more intimate or more distant acquaintances to the door; and my pupil was indiscriminately introduced to all, that he might accustom himself to change of faces, and be rid with speed of his rustick diffidence. He soon endeared himself to his mother by the speedy acquisition or recovery of her darling qualities; his eyes sparkle at a numerous assembly, and his heart dances at the mention of a ball. He has at once caught the infection of high life, and has no other test of principles or actions than the quality of those to whom they are ascribed. He begins already to look down on me with superiority, and submits to one short lesson in a week, as an act of condescension rather than obedience; for he is of opinion, that no tutor is properly qualified who cannot speak French; and having formerly learned a few familiar phrases from his sister's governess, he is every day soliciting his mamma to procure him a foreign footman, that he may grow polite by his conversation. I am not yet insulted, but find myself likely to become soon a superfluous incumbrance, for my scholar has now no time for science, or for virtue; and the lady yesterday declared him so much the favourite of every company, that she was afraid he would not have an hour in the day to dance and fence.

I am, &c.

EUMATHES.

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N°. 133. TUESDAY, JUNE 25, 1751.

Magna quidem sacris quæ dat præcepta libellis
Victrix fortunæ sapientia. Dicimus autem
Hos quoque felices, qui ferre incommoda vitæ,
Nec jactare jugum vita didicere magistra. Juv. Sat. xiii. 19.

Let stoicks ethicks' haughty rules advance
To combat fortune, and to conquer chance:
Yet happy those, though not so learn'd are thought,
Whom life instructs, who by experience taught,
For new to come from past misfortunes look,
Nor shake the yoke, which galls the more 'tis shook. Creech.

TO THE RAMBLER.

SIR,

You have shown, by the publication of my letter, that you think the life of Victoria not wholly unworthy of the notice of a philosopher: I shall, therefore, continue my narrative, without any apology for unimportance which you have dignified, or for inaccuracies which you are to correct.

When my life appeared to be no longer in danger, and as much of my strength was recovered as enabled me to bear the agitation of a coach, I was placed at a lodging in a neighbouring village, to which my mother dismissed me with a faint embrace, having repeated her command not to expose my face too soon to the sun or wind, and told me that with care I might, perhaps, become tolerable again. The prospect of being tolerable had very little power to elevate the imagination of one who had so long been accustomed to praise and ecstasy; but it was some satisfaction to be separated from my mother, who was incessantly ringing the knell of departed beauty, and never entered my room without the whine of condolence, or the growl of anger. She often wandered over my face, as travellers over the ruins of a celebrated city, to note every place which had once been remarkable for a happy feature. She condescended to visit my retirement, but always left me more melancholy; for after a thousand trifling inquiries

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about my diet, and a minute examination of my looks, she generally concluded with a sigh, that I should never more be fit to be seen.

At last I was permitted to return home, but found no great improvement of my condition; for I was imprisoned in my chamber as a criminal, whose appearance would disgrace my friends, and condemn me to be tortured into new beauty. Every experiment which the officiousness of folly could communicate, or the credulity of ignorance admit, was tried upon me. Sometimes I was covered with emollients, by which it was expected that all the scars would be filled, and my cheeks plumped up to their former smoothness; and sometimes I was punished with artificial excoriations, in hopes of gaining new graces with a new skin. The cosmetick science was exhausted upon me; but who can repair the ruins of nature? My mother was forced to give me rest at last, and abandon me to the fate of a fallen toast, whose fortune she considered as a hopeless game, no longer worthy of solicitude or attention.

The condition of a young woman who has never thought or heard of any other excellence than beauty, and whom the sudden blast of disease wrinkles in her bloom, is, indeed, sufficiently calamitous. She is at once deprived of all that gave her eminence or power; of all that elated her pride, or animated her activity; all that filled her days with pleasure, and her nights with hope; all that gave gladness to the present hour, or brightened her prospects of futurity. It is, perhaps, not in the power of a man whose attention has been divided by diversity of pursuits, and who has not been accustomed to derive from others much of his happiness, to image to himself such helpless destitution, such dismal inanity. Every object of pleasing contemplation is at once snatched away, and the soul finds every receptacle of ideas empty, or filled only with the memory of joys that can return no more. All is gloomy privation, or impotent desire; the faculties of anticipation slumber in despondency, or the powers of pleasure mutiny for employment.

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I was so little able to find entertainment for myself, that I was forced, in a short time, to venture abroad as the solitary savage is driven by hunger from his cavern. I entered with all the humility of disgrace into assemblies, where I had lately sparkled with gaiety, and towered with triumph. I was not wholly without hope, that dejection had misrepresented me to myself, and that the remains of my former face might yet have some attraction and influence; but the first circle of visits convinced me, that my reign was at an end; that life and death were no longer in my hands; that I was no more to practise the glance of command, or the frown of prohibition; to receive the tribute of sighs and praises, or be soothed with the gentle murmurs of amorous timidity. My opinion was now unheard, and my proposals were unregarded; the narrowness of my knowledge, and the meanness of my sentiments, were easily discovered, when the eyes were no longer engaged against the judgment; and it was observed, by those who had formerly been charmed with my vivacious loquacity, that my understanding was impaired as well as my face, and that I was no longer qualified to fill a place in any company but a party at cards.

It is scarcely to be imagined how soon the mind sinks to a level with the condition. I, who had long considered all who approached me as vassals condemned to regulate their pleasures by my eyes, and harass their inventions for my entertainment, was in less than three weeks reduced to receive a ticket with professions of obligation; to catch with eagerness at a compliment; and to watch with all the anxiousness of dependence, lest any little civility that was paid me should pass unacknowledged.

Though the negligence of the men was not very pleasing when compared with vows and adoration, yet it was far more supportable than the insolence of my own sex. For the first ten months after my return into the world, I never entered a single house in which the memory of my downfal was not revived. At one place I was congratulated on my escape with life; at another I heard of the benefits

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of early inoculation; by some I have been told, in express terms, that I am not yet without my charms; others have whispered at my entrance, This is the celebrated beauty. One told me of a wash that would smooth the skin; and another offered me her chair that I might not front the light. Some soothed me with the observation that none can tell how soon my case may be her own; and some thought it proper to receive me with mournful tenderness, formal condolence, and consolatory blandishments.

Thus was I every day harassed with all the stratagems of well-bred malignity; yet insolence was more tolerable than solitude, and I therefore persisted to keep my time at the doors of my acquaintance, without gratifying them with any appearance of resentment or depression. I expected that their exultation would in time vapour away; that the joy of their superiority would end with its novelty; and that I should be suffered to glide along in my present form among the nameless multitude, whom nature never intended to excite envy or admiration, nor enabled to delight the eye or inflame the heart.

This was naturally to be expected, and this I began to experience. But when I was no longer agitated by the perpetual ardour of resistance, and effort of perseverance, I found more sensibly the want of those entertainments which had formerly delighted me; the day rose upon me without an engagement; and the evening closed in its natural gloom, without summoning me to a concert or a ball. None had any care to find amusements for me, and I had no power of amusing myself. Idleness exposed me to melancholy, and life began to languish in motionless indifference.

Misery and shame are nearly allied. It was not without many struggles that I prevailed on myself to confess my uneasiness to Euphemia, the only friend who had never pained me with comfort or with pity. I at last laid my calamities before her, rather to ease my heart, than receive assistance. "We must distinguish," said she, "my Victoria, those evils which are imposed by providence, from

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those to which we ourselves give the power of hurting us. Of your calamity, a small part is the infliction of heaven, the rest is little more than the corrosion of idle discontent. You have lost that which may, indeed, sometimes contribute to happiness, but to which happiness is by no means inseparably annexed. You have lost what the greater number of the human race never have possessed; what those on whom it is bestowed for the most part possess in vain; and what you, while it was yours, knew not how to use: you have only lost early what the laws of nature forbid you to keep long, and have lost it while your mind is yet flexible, and while you have time to substitute more valuable and more durable excellencies. Consider yourself, my Victoria, as a being born to know, to reason, and to act; rise at once from your dream of melancholy to wisdom and to piety; you will find that there are other charms than those of beauty, and other joys than the praise of fools."

I am, sir, &c.

VICTORIA.

N°. 134. SATURDAY, JUNE 29, 1751.

Quis scit an adjiciant hodiernæ crastina summæ
Tempora Dii superi? HOR. Lib. iv. Ode vii. 17.

Who knows if heav'n, with ever-bounteous pow'r,
Shall add to-morrow to the present hour? FRANCIS.

I SAT yesterday morning employed in deliberating on which, among the various subjects that occurred to my imagination, I should bestow the paper of to-day. After a short effort of meditation by which nothing was determined, I grew every moment more irresolute, my ideas wandered from the first intention, and I rather wished to think, than thought upon any settled subject; till at last I was awakened from this dream of study by a summons from the press; the time was now come for which I had been

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thus negligently purposing to provide, and, however dubious or sluggish, I was now necessitated to write.

Though to a writer whose design is so comprehensive and miscellaneous, that he may accommodate himself with a topick from every scene of life, or view of nature, it is no great aggravation of his task to be obliged to a sudden composition; yet I could not forbear to reproach myself for having so long neglected what was unavoidably to be done, and of which every moment's idleness increased the difficulty. There was, however, some pleasure in reflecting that I, who had only trifled till diligence was necessary, might still congratulate myself upon my superiority to multitudes, who have trifled till diligence is vain; who can by no degree of activity or resolution recover the opportunities which have slipped away; and who are condemned, by their own carelessness, to hopeless calamity and barren sorrow.

The folly of allowing ourselves to delay what we know cannot be finally escaped, is one of the general weaknesses, which, in spite of the instruction of moralists, and the remonstrances of reason, prevail to a greater or less degree in every mind; even they who most steadily withstand it, find it, if not the most violent, the most pertinacious of their passions, always renewing its attacks, and though often vanquished, never destroyed.

It is, indeed, natural to have particular regard to the time present, and to be most solicitous for that which is by its nearness enabled to make the strongest impressions. When, therefore, any sharp pain is to be suffered, or any formidable danger to be incurred, we can scarcely exempt ourselves wholly from the seducements of imagination; we readily believe that another day will bring some support or advantage which we now want; and are easily persuaded, that the moment of necessity which we desire never to arrive, is at a great distance from us.

Thus life is languished away in the gloom of anxiety, and consumed in collecting resolutions which the next morning dissipates; in forming purposes which we scarcely

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hope to keep, and reconciling ourselves to our own cowardice by excuses, which, while we admit them, we know to be absurd. Our firmness is, by the continual contemplation of misery, hourly impaired; every submission to our fear enlarges its dominion; we not only waste that time in which the evil we dread might have been suffered and surmounted, but even where procrastination produces no absolute increase of our difficulties, make them less superable to ourselves by habitual terrours. When evils cannot be avoided, it is wise to contract the interval of expectation; to meet the mischiefs which will overtake us if we fly; and suffer only their real malignity, without the conflicts of doubt, and anguish of anticipation.

To act is far easier than to suffer; yet we every day see the progress of life retarded by the *vis inertiæ*, the mere repugnance to motion, and find multitudes repining at the want of that which nothing but idleness hinders them from enjoying. The case of Tantalus, in the region of poetick punishment, was somewhat to be pitied, because the fruits that hung about him retired from his hand; but what tenderness can be claimed by those who, though perhaps they suffer the pains of Tantalus, will never lift their hands for their own relief?

There is nothing more common among this torpid generation than murmurs and complaints; murmurs at uneasiness which only vacancy and suspicion expose them to feel, and complaints of distresses which it is in their own power to remove. Laziness is commonly associated with timidity. Either fear originally prohibits endeavours by infusing despair of success; or the frequent failure of irresolute struggles, and the constant desire of avoiding labour, impress, by degrees, false terrours on the mind. But fear, whether natural or acquired, when once it has full possession of the fancy, never fails to employ it upon visions of calamity, such as, if they are not dissipated by useful employment, will soon overcast it with horrours, and imbitter life not only with those miseries by which all earthly beings are really more or less tormented, but with

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those which do not yet exist, and which can only be discerned by the perspicacity of cowardice.

Among all who sacrifice future advantage to present inclination, scarcely any gain so little as those that suffer themselves to freeze in idleness. Others are corrupted by some enjoyment of more or less power to gratify the passions; but to neglect our duties merely to avoid the labour of performing them, a labour which is always punctually rewarded, is surely to sink under weak temptations. Idleness never can secure tranquillity; the call of reason and of conscience will pierce the closest pavilion of the sluggard, and though it may not have force to drive him from his down, will be loud enough to hinder him from sleep. Those moments which he cannot resolve to make useful, by devoting them to the great business of his being, will still be usurped by powers that will not leave them to his disposal; remorse and vexation will seize upon them, and forbid him to enjoy what he is so desirous to appropriate.

There are other causes of inactivity incident to more active faculties and more acute discernment. He to whom many objects of pursuit arise at the same time, will frequently hesitate between different desires, till a rival has precluded him, or change his course as new attractions prevail, and harass himself without advancing. He who sees different ways to the same end, will, unless he watches carefully over his own conduct, lay out too much of his attention upon the comparison of probabilities, and the adjustment of expedients, and pause in the choice of his road till some accident intercepts his journey. He whose penetration extends to remote consequences, and who, whenever he applies his attention to any design, discovers new prospects of advantage, and possibilities of improvement, will not easily be persuaded that his project is ripe for execution; but will superadd one contrivance to another, endeavour to unite various purposes in one operation, multiply complications, and refine niceties, till he is entangled in his own scheme, and bewildered in the per-

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plexity of various intentions. He that resolves to unite all the beauties of situation in a new purchase, must waste his life in roving to no purpose from province to province. He that hopes in the same house to obtain every convenience, may draw plans, and study Palladio, but will never lay a stone. He will attempt a treatise on some important subject, and amass materials, consult authors, and study all the dependant and collateral parts of learning, but never conclude himself qualified to write. He that has abilities to conceive perfection, will not easily be content without it; and, since perfection cannot be reached, will lose the opportunity of doing well in the vain hope of unattainable excellence.

The certainty that life cannot be long, and the probability that it will be much shorter than nature allows, ought to awaken every man to the active prosecution of whatever he is desirous to perform. It is true, that no diligence can ascertain success; death may intercept the swiftest career; but he who is cut off in the execution of an honest undertaking, has at least the honour of falling in his rank, and has fought the battle, though he missed the victory.

N°. 135. TUESDAY, JULY 2, 1751.

Cœlum, non animum, mutant. HOR. Lib. i. Ep. xii. 27.

Place may be chang'd; but who can change his mind?

IT is impossible to take a view on any side, or observe any of the various classes that form the great community of the world, without discovering the influence of example; and admitting with new conviction the observation of Aristotle, that *man is an imitative being*. The greater, far the greater number, follow the track which others have beaten, without any curiosity after new discoveries, or ambition of trusting themselves to their own conduct. And, of those who break the ranks and disorder the uniformity of the

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march, most return in a short time from their deviation, and prefer the equal and steady satisfaction of security before the frolicks of caprice and the honours of adventure.

In questions difficult or dangerous it is, indeed, natural to repose upon authority, and, when fear happens to predominate, upon the authority of those whom we do not in general think wiser than ourselves. Very few have abilities requisite for the discovery of abstruse truth; and of those few some want leisure, and some resolution. But it is not so easy to find the reason of the universal submission to precedent where every man might safely judge for himself; where no irreparable loss can be hazarded, nor any mischief of long continuance incurred. Vanity might be expected to operate where the more powerful passions are not awakened; the mere pleasure of acknowledging no superior might produce slight singularities, or the hope of gaining some new degree of happiness awaken the mind to invention or experiment.

If in any case the shackles of prescription could be wholly shaken off, and the imagination left to act without control, on what occasion should it be expected, but in the selection of lawful pleasure? Pleasure, of which the essence is choice; which compulsion dissociates from every thing to which nature has united it; and which owes not only its vigour but its being to the smiles of liberty. Yet we see that the senses, as well as the reason, are regulated by credulity; and that most will feel, or say that they feel, the gratifications which others have taught them to expect.

At this time of universal migration, when almost every one, considerable enough to attract regard, has retired, or is preparing with all the earnestness of distress to retire, into the country; when nothing is to be heard but the hopes of speedy departure, or the complaints of involuntary delay; I have often been tempted to inquire what happiness is to be gained, or what inconvenience to be avoided, by this stated recession? Of the birds of passage, some follow the summer and some the winter, because they live upon sustenance which only summer or winter can supply;

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but of the annual flight of human rovers it is much harder to assign the reason, because they do not appear either to find or seek any thing which is not equally afforded by the town and country.

I believe that many of these fugitives may have heard of men whose continual wish was for the quiet of retirement, who watched every opportunity to steal away from observation, to forsake the crowd, and delight themselves with *the society of solitude*. There is, indeed, scarcely any writer who has not celebrated the happiness of rural privacy, and delighted himself and his reader with the melody of birds, the whisper of groves, and the murmur of rivulets; nor any man eminent for extent of capacity, or greatness of exploits, that has not left behind him some memorials of lonely wisdom, and silent dignity.

But almost all absurdity of conduct arises from the imitation of those whom we cannot resemble. Those who thus testified their weariness of tumult and hurry, and hasted with so much eagerness to the leisure of retreat, were either men overwhelmed with the pressure of difficult employments, harassed with importunities, and distracted with multiplicity; or men wholly engrossed by speculative sciences, who having no other end of life but to learn and teach, found their searches interrupted by the common commerce of civility, and their reasonings disjointed by frequent interruptions. Such men might reasonably fly to that ease and convenience which their condition allowed them to find only in the country. The statesman who devoted the greater part of his time to the publick, was desirous of keeping the remainder in his own power. The general, ruffled with dangers, wearied with labours, and stunned with acclamations, gladly snatched an interval of silence and relaxation. The naturalist was unhappy where the works of providence were not always before him. The reasoner could adjust his systems only where his mind was free from the intrusion of outward objects.

Such examples of solitude very few of those who are now hastening from the town, have any pretensions to plead

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in their own justification, since they cannot pretend either weariness of labour, or desire of knowledge. They purpose nothing more than to quit one scene of idleness for another, and after having trifled in publick, to sleep in secrecy. The utmost that they can hope to gain is the change of ridiculousness to obscurity, and the privilege of having fewer witnesses to a life of folly. He who is not sufficiently important to be disturbed in his pursuits, but spends all his hours according to his own inclination, and has more hours than his mental faculties enable him to fill either with enjoyment or desires, can have nothing to demand of shades and valleys. As bravery is said to be a panoply, insignificancy is always a shelter.

There are, however, pleasures and advantages in a rural situation, which are not confined to philosophers and heroes. The freshness of the air, the verdure of the woods, the paint of the meadows, and the unexhausted variety which summer scatters upon the earth, may easily give delight to an unlearned spectator. It is not necessary that he who looks with pleasure on the colours of a flower should study the principles of vegetation, or that the Ptolemaick and Copernican system should be compared before the light of the sun can gladden, or its warmth invigorate. Novelty is itself a source of gratification; and Milton justly observes, that to him who has been long pent up in cities, no rural object can be presented, which will not delight or refresh some of his senses.

Yet even these easy pleasures are missed by the greater part of those who waste their summer in the country. Should any man pursue his acquaintances to their retreats, he would find few of them listening to Philomel, loitering in woods, or plucking daisies, catching the healthy gale of the morning, or watching the gentle coruscations of declining day. Some will be discovered at a window by the road side, rejoicing when a new cloud of dust gathers towards them, as at the approach of a momentary supply of conversation, and a short relief from the tediousness of unideal vacancy. Others are placed in the adjacent vil-

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lages, where they look only upon houses as in the rest of the year, with no change of objects but what a remove to any new street in London might have given them. The same set of acquaintances still settle together, and the form of life is not otherwise diversified than by doing the same things in a different place. They pay and receive visits in the usual form, they frequent the walks in the morning, they deal cards at night, they attend to the same tattle, and dance with the same partners; nor can they, at their return to their former habitation, congratulate themselves on any other advantage, than that they have passed their time like others of the same rank; and have the same right to talk of the happiness and beauty of the country, of happiness which they never felt, and beauty which they never regarded.

To be able to procure its own entertainments, and to subsist upon its own stock, is not the prerogative of every mind. There are, indeed, understandings so fertile and comprehensive, that they can always feed reflection with new supplies, and suffer nothing from the preclusion of adventitious amusements; as some cities have within their own walls enclosed ground enough to feed their inhabitants in a siege. But others live only from day to day, and must be constantly enabled, by foreign supplies, to keep out the encroachments of languor and stupidity. Such could not, indeed, be blamed for hovering within reach of their usual pleasure, more than any other animal for not quitting its native element, were not their faculties contracted by their own fault. But let not those who go into the country, merely because they dare not be left alone at home, boast their love of nature, or their qualifications for solitude; nor pretend that they receive instantaneous infusions of wisdom from the Dryads, and are able, when they leave smoke and noise behind, to act, or think, or reason for themselves.

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N°. 136. SATURDAY, JULY 6, 1751.

Ἐχθρὸς γάρ μοι κεῖνος ὁμῶς Ἀΐδαο πύλῃσιν,
Ὅς χ' ἕτερον μὲν κεύθει ἐνὶ φρεσὶν, ἄλλο δὲ βάζῃ. HOMER. I'. 312.

Who dares think one thing, and another tell,
My heart detests him as the gates of hell. POPE.

THE regard which they whose abilities are employed in the works of imagination claim from the rest of mankind, arises in a great measure from their influence on futurity. Rank may be conferred by princes, and wealth bequeathed by misers or by robbers; but the honours of a lasting name, and the veneration of distant ages, only the sons of learning have the power of bestowing. While, therefore, it continues one of the characteristicks of rational nature to decline oblivion, authors never can be wholly overlooked in the search after happiness, nor become contemptible but by their own fault.

The man who considers himself as constituted the ultimate judge of disputable characters, and intrusted with the distribution of the last terrestrial rewards of merit, ought to summon all his fortitude to the support of his integrity, and resolve to discharge an office of such dignity with the most vigilant caution and scrupulous justice. To deliver examples to posterity, and to regulate the opinion of future times, is no slight or trivial undertaking; nor is it easy to commit more atrocious treason against the great republick of humanity, than by falsifying its records and misguiding its decrees.

To scatter praise or blame without regard to justice, is to destroy the distinction of good and evil. Many have no other test of actions than general opinion; and all are so far influenced by a sense of reputation, that they are often restrained by fear of reproach, and excited by hope of honour, when other principles have lost their power; nor can any species of prostitution promote general depravity more than that which destroys the force of praise, by showing

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that it may be acquired without deserving it, and which, by setting free the active and ambitious from the dread of infamy, lets loose the rapacity of power, and weakens the only authority by which greatness is controlled.

Praise, like gold and diamonds, owes its value only to its scarcity. It becomes cheap as it becomes vulgar, and will no longer raise expectation, or animate enterprise. It is, therefore, not only necessary, that wickedness, even when it is not safe to censure it, be denied applause, but that goodness be commended only in proportion to its degree; and that the garlands, due to the great benefactors of mankind, be not suffered to fade upon the brow of him who can boast only petty services and easy virtues.

Had these maxims been universally received, how much would have been added to the task of dedication, the work on which all the power of modern wit has been exhausted. How few of these initial panegyricks had appeared, if the author had been obliged first to find a man of virtue, then to distinguish the distinct species and degree of his desert, and at last to pay him only the honours which he might justly claim. It is much easier to learn the name of the last man whom chance has exalted to wealth and power, to obtain by the intervention of some of his domesticks the privilege of addressing him, or, in confidence of the general acceptance of flattery, to venture on an address without any previous solicitation; and after having heaped upon him all the virtues to which philosophy had assigned a name, inform him how much more might be truly said, did not the fear of giving pain to his modesty repress the raptures of wonder and the zeal of veneration.

Nothing has so much degraded literature from its natural rank, as the practice of indecent and promiscuous dedication; for what credit can he expect who professes himself the hireling of vanity, however profligate, and without shame or scruple, celebrates the worthless, dignifies the mean, and gives to the corrupt, licentious, and oppressive, the ornaments which ought only to add grace to truth, and loveliness to innocence? Every other kind of adulation,

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however shameful, however mischievous, is less detestable than the crime of counterfeiting characters, and fixing the stamp of literary sanction upon the dross and refuse of the world.

Yet I would not overwhelm the authors with the whole load of infamy, of which part, perhaps the greater part, ought to fall upon their patrons. If he that hires a bravo, partakes the guilt of murder, why should he who bribes a flatterer, hope to be exempted from the shame of falsehood? The unhappy dedicator is seldom without some motives which obstruct, though not destroy, the liberty of choice; he is oppressed by miseries which he hopes to relieve, or inflamed by ambition which he expects to gratify. But the patron has no incitements equally violent; he can receive only a short gratification, with which nothing but stupidity could dispose him to be pleased. The real satisfaction which praise can afford is by repeating aloud the whispers of conscience, and by showing us that we have not endeavoured to deserve well in vain. Every other encomium is, to an intelligent mind, satire and reproach; the celebration of those virtues which we feel ourselves to want, can only impress a quicker sense of our own defects, and show that we have not yet satisfied the expectations of the world, by forcing us to observe how much fiction must contribute to the completion of our character.

Yet sometimes the patron may claim indulgence; for it does not always happen, that the encomiast has been much encouraged to his attempt. Many a hapless author, when his book, and perhaps his dedication, was ready for the press, has waited long before any one would pay the price of prostitution, or consent to hear the praises destined to insure his name against the casualties of time; and many a complaint has been vented against the decline of learning, and neglect of genius, when either parsimonious prudence has declined expense, or honest indignation rejected falsehood. But if at last, after long inquiry and innumerable disappointments, he find a lord willing to hear of his own eloquence and taste, a statesman desirous of knowing how

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a friendly historian will represent his conduct, or a lady delighted to leave to the world some memorial of her wit and beauty, such weakness cannot be censured as an instance of enormous depravity. The wisest man may, by a diligent solicitor, be surprised in the hour of weakness, and persuaded to solace vexation, or invigorate hope, with the musick of flattery.

To censure all dedications as adulatory and servile, would discover rather envy than justice. Praise is the tribute of merit, and he that has incontestably distinguished himself by any publick performance, has a right to all the honours which the publick can bestow. To men thus raised above the rest of the community, there is no need that the book or its author should have any particular relation; that the patron is known to deserve respect, is sufficient to vindicate him that pays it. To the same regard from particular persons, private virtue and less conspicuous excellence may be sometimes entitled. An author may, with great propriety, inscribe his work to him by whose encouragement it was undertaken, or by whose liberality he has been enabled to prosecute it, and he may justly rejoice in his own fortitude that dares to rescue merit from obscurity.

Acribus exemplis videor te claudere: misce
Ergo aliquid nostris de moribus.——

Thus much I will indulge thee for thy ease,
And mingle something of our times to please. DRYDEN, jun.

I know not whether greater relaxation may not be indulged, and whether hope as well as gratitude may not unblamably produce a dedication; but let the writer who pours out his praises only to propitiate power, or attract the attention of greatness, be cautious lest his desire betray him to exuberant eulogies. We are naturally more apt to please ourselves with the future than the past, and while we luxuriate in expectation, may be easily persuaded to purchase what we yet rate, only by imagination, at a higher price than experience will warrant.

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But no private views of personal regard can discharge any man from his general obligations to virtue and to truth. It may happen, in the various combinations of life, that a good man may receive favours from one, who, notwithstanding his accidental beneficence, cannot be justly proposed to the imitation of others, and whom, therefore, he must find some other way of rewarding than by publick celebrations. Self-love has, indeed, many powers of seducement; but it surely ought not to exalt any individual to equality with the collective body of mankind, or persuade him that a benefit conferred on him is equivalent to every other virtue. Yet many, upon false principles of gratitude, have ventured to extol wretches, whom all but their dependants numbered among the reproaches of the species, and whom they would likewise have beheld with the same scorn, had they not been hired to dishonest approbation.

To encourage merit with praise is the great business of literature; but praise must lose its influence, by unjust or negligent distribution; and he that impairs its value may be charged with misapplication of the power that genius puts into his hands, and with squandering on guilt the recompense of virtue.

N°. 137. TUESDAY, JULY 9, 1751.

Dum vitant stulti vitia, in contraria currunt. Hor. Lib. i. Sat. ii. 24.

——Whilst fools one vice condemn,
They run into the opposite extreme. Creech.

That wonder is the effect of ignorance, has been often observed. The awful stillness of attention, with which the mind is overspread at the first view of an unexpected effect, ceases when we have leisure to disentangle complications and investigate causes. Wonder is a pause of reason, a sudden cessation of the mental progress, which lasts only while the understanding is fixed upon some single idea, and is at an end when it recovers force

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enough to divide the object into its parts, or mark the intermediate gradations from the first agent to the last consequence.

It may be remarked, with equal truth, that ignorance is often the effect of wonder. It is common for those who have never accustomed themselves to the labour of inquiry, nor invigorated their confidence by conquests over difficulty, to sleep in the gloomy quiescence of astonishment, without any effort to animate inquiry, or dispel obscurity. What they cannot immediately conceive, they consider as too high to be reached, or too extensive to be comprehended; they therefore content themselves with the gaze of folly, forbear to attempt what they have no hopes of performing, and resign the pleasure of rational contemplation to more pertinacious study, or more active faculties.

Among the productions of mechanick art, many are of a form so different from that of their first materials, and many consist of parts so numerous and so nicely adapted to each other, that it is not possible to view them without amazement. But when we enter the shops of artificers, observe the various tools by which every operation is facilitated, and trace the progress of a manufacture through the different hands, that, in succession to each other, contribute to its perfection, we soon discover that every single man has an easy task, and that the extremes, however remote, of natural rudeness and artificial elegance, are joined by a regular concatenation of effects, of which every one is introduced by that which precedes it, and equally introduces that which is to follow.

The same is the state of intellectual and manual performances. Long calculations or complex diagrams affright the timorous and unexperienced from a second view; but if we have skill sufficient to analyze them into simple principles, it will be discovered that our fear was groundless. *Divide and conquer*, is a principle equally just in science as in policy. Complication is a species of confederacy, which, while it continues united, bids de-

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fiance to the most active and vigorous intellect; but of which every member is separately weak, and which may therefore be quickly subdued, if it can once be broken.

The chief art of learning, as Locke has observed, is to attempt but little at a time. The widest excursions of the mind are made by short flights frequently repeated; the most lofty fabricks of science are formed by the continued accumulation of single propositions.

It often happens, whatever be the cause, that impatience of labour, or dread of miscarriage, seizes those who are most distinguished for quickness of apprehension; and that they who might, with greatest reason, promise themselves victory, are least willing to hazard the encounter. This diffidence, where the attention is not laid asleep by laziness, or dissipated by pleasures, can arise only from confused and general views, such as negligence snatches in haste, or from the disappointment of the first hopes formed by arrogance without reflection. To expect that the intricacies of science will be pierced by a careless glance, or the eminences of fame ascended without labour, is to expect a particular privilege, a power denied to the rest of mankind; but to suppose that the maze is inscrutable to diligence, or the heights inaccessible to perseverance, is to submit tamely to the tyranny of fancy, and enchain the mind in voluntary shackles.

It is the proper ambition of the heroes in literature to enlarge the boundaries of knowledge by discovering and conquering new regions of the intellectual world. To the success of such undertakings perhaps some degree of fortuitous happiness is necessary, which no man can promise or procure to himself; and therefore doubt and irresolution may be forgiven in him that ventures into the unexplored abysses of truth, and attempts to find his way through the fluctuations of uncertainty, and the conflicts of contradiction. But when nothing more is required, than to pursue a path already beaten, and to trample obstacles which others have demolished, why should any man so much dis-

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trust his own intellect as to imagine himself unequal to the attempt?

It were to be wished that they who devote their lives to study would at once believe nothing too great for their attainment, and consider nothing as too little for their regard; that they would extend their notice alike to science and to life, and unite some knowledge of the present world to their acquaintance with past ages and remote events.

Nothing has so much exposed men of learning to contempt and ridicule, as their ignorance of things which are known to all but themselves. Those who have been taught to consider the institutions of the schools, as giving the last perfection to human abilities, are surprised to see men wrinkled with study, yet wanting to be instructed in the minute circumstances of propriety, or the necessary forms of daily transaction; and quickly shake off their reverence for modes of education, which they find to produce no ability above the rest of mankind.

"Books," says Bacon, "can never teach the use of books." The student must learn by commerce with mankind to reduce his speculations to practice, and accommodate his knowledge to the purposes of life.

It is too common for those who have been bred to scholastick professions, and passed much of their time in academies where nothing but learning confers honours, to disregard every other qualification, and to imagine that they shall find mankind ready to pay homage to their knowledge, and to crowd about them for instruction. They therefore step out from their cells into the open world with all the confidence of authority and dignity of importance; they look round about them at once with ignorance and scorn on a race of beings to whom they are equally unknown and equally contemptible, but whose manners they must imitate, and with whose opinions they must comply, if they desire to pass their time happily among them.

To lessen that disdain with which scholars are inclined

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to look on the common business of the world, and the unwillingness with which they condescend to learn what is not to be found in any system of philosophy, it may be necessary to consider that though admiration is excited by abstruse researches and remote discoveries, yet pleasure is not given, nor affection conciliated, but by softer accomplishments, and qualities more easily communicable to those about us. He that can only converse upon questions, about which only a small part of mankind has knowledge sufficient to make them curious, must lose his days in unsocial silence, and live in the crowd of life without a companion. He that can only be useful on great occasions, may die without exerting his abilities, and stand a helpless spectator of a thousand vexations which fret away happiness, and which nothing is required to remove but a little dexterity of conduct and readiness of expedients.

No degree of knowledge attainable by man is able to set him above the want of hourly assistance, or to extinguish the desire of fond endearments, and tender officiousness; and, therefore, no one should think it unnecessary to learn those arts by which friendship may be gained. Kindness is preserved by a constant reciprocation of benefits or interchange of pleasures; but such benefits only can be bestowed, as others are capable to receive, and such pleasures only imparted, as others are qualified to enjoy.

By this descent from the pinnacles of art no honour will be lost; for the condescensions of learning are always overpaid by gratitude. An elevated genius employed in little things, appears, to use the simile of Longinus, like the sun in his evening declination; he remits his splendour but retains his magnitude, and pleases more though he dazzles less.

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N°. 138. SATURDAY, JULY 13, 1751.

O tantum libeat mecum tibi sordida rura,
Atque humiles habitare casas, et figere cervos. VIRG. Ec. ii. 28.
With me retire, and leave the pomp of courts
For humble cottages and rural sports.

TO THE RAMBLER.

SIR,

THOUGH the contempt with which you have treated the annual migrations of the gay and busy part of mankind is justified by daily observation; since most of those who leave the town, neither vary their entertainments nor enlarge their notions; yet I suppose you do not intend to represent the practice itself as ridiculous, or to declare that he whose condition puts the distribution of his time into his own power may not properly divide it between the town and country.

That the country, and only the country, displays the inexhaustible varieties of nature, and supplies the philosophical mind with matter for admiration and inquiry, never was denied; but my curiosity is very little attracted by the colour of a flower, the anatomy of an insect, or the structure of a nest; I am generally employed upon human manners, and, therefore, fill up the months of rural leisure with remarks on those who live within the circle of my notice. If writers would more frequently visit those regions of negligence and liberty, they might diversify their representations, and multiply their images, for in the country are original characters chiefly to be found. In cities, and yet more in courts, the minute discriminations which distinguish one from another are, for the most part, effaced, the peculiarities of temper and opinion are gradually worn away by promiscuous converse, as angular bodies and uneven surfaces lose their points and asperities by frequent attrition against one another, and approach, by degrees, to uniform rotundity. The prevalence of fashion,

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the influence of example, the desire of applause, and the dread of censure, obstruct the natural tendencies of the mind, and check the fancy in its first efforts to break forth into experiments of caprice.

Few inclinations are so strong as to grow up into habits, when they must struggle with the constant opposition of settled forms and established customs. But in the country every man is a separate and independent being: solitude flatters irregularity with hopes of secrecy; and wealth, removed from the mortification of comparison, and the awe of equality, swells into contemptuous confidence, and sets blame and laughter at defiance; the impulses of nature act unrestrained, and the disposition dares to show itself in its true form, without any disguise of hypocrisy, or decorations of elegance. Every one indulges the full enjoyment of his own choice, and talks and lives with no other view than to please himself, without inquiring how far he deviates from the general practice, or considering others as entitled to any account of his sentiments or actions. If he builds or demolishes, opens or encloses, deluges or drains, it is not his care what may be the opinion of those who are skilled in perspective or architecture, it is sufficient that he has no landlord to control him, and that none has any right to examine in what projects the lord of the manor spends his own money on his own grounds.

For this reason it is not very common to want subjects for rural conversation. Almost every man is daily doing something which produces merriment, wonder, or resentment, among his neighbours. This utter exemption from restraint leaves every anomalous quality to operate in its full extent, and suffers the natural character to diffuse itself to every part of life. The pride which, under the check of publick observation, would have been only vented among servants and domesticks, becomes, in a country baronet, the torment of a province, and instead of terminating in the destruction of china-ware and glasses, ruins tenants, dispossesses cottagers, and harasses villages with actions of trespass and bills of indictment.

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It frequently happens that, even without violent passions, or enormous corruption, the freedom and laxity of a rustick life produces remarkable particularities of conduct or manner. In the province where I now reside, we have one lady eminent for wearing a gown always of the same cut and colour; another for shaking hands with those that visit her; and a third for unshaken resolution never to let tea or coffee enter her house.

But of all the female characters which this place affords, I have found none so worthy of attention as that of Mrs. Busy, a widow, who lost her husband in her thirtieth year, and has since passed her time at the manor-house in the government of her children, and the management of the estate.

Mrs. Busy was married at eighteen from a boarding-school, where she had passed her time like other young ladies in needlework, with a few intervals of dancing and reading. When she became a bride she spent one winter with her husband in town, where, having no idea of any conversation beyond the formalities of a visit, she found nothing to engage her passions; and when she had been one night at court, and two at an opera, and seen the monument, the tombs, and the tower, she concluded that London had nothing more to show, and wondered that when women had once seen the world, they could not be content to stay at home. She, therefore, went willingly to the ancient seat, and for some years studied housewifery under Mr. Busy's mother, with so much assiduity, that the old lady, when she died, bequeathed her a caudle-cup, a soup-dish, two beakers, and a chest of table-linen spun by herself.

Mr. Busy, finding the economical qualities of his lady, resigned his affairs wholly into her hands, and devoted his life to his pointers and his hounds. He never visited his estates but to destroy the partridges or foxes; and often committed such devastations, in the rage of pleasure, that some of his tenants refused to hold their lands at the usual rent. Their landlady persuaded them to be satisfied, and

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entreated her husband to dismiss his dogs, with many exact calculations of the ale drunk by his companions, and corn consumed by the horses, and remonstrances against the insolence of the huntsman, and the frauds of the groom. The huntsman was too necessary to his happiness to be discarded; and he had still continued to ravage his own estate, had he not caught a cold and a fever by shooting mallards in the fens. His fever was followed by a consumption, which in a few months brought him to the grave.

Mrs. Busy was too much an economist to feel either joy or sorrow at his death. She received the compliments and consolations of her neighbours in a dark room, out of which she stole privately every night and morning to see the cows milked; and after a few days declared that she thought a widow might employ herself better than in nursing grief; and that, for her part, she was resolved that the fortunes of her children should not be impaired by her neglect.

She, therefore, immediately applied herself to the reformation of abuses. She gave away the dogs, discharged the servants of the kennel and stable, and sent the horses to the next fair, but rated at so high a price that they returned unsold. She was resolved to have nothing idle about her, and ordered them to be employed in common drudgery. They lost their sleekness and grace, and were soon purchased at half the value.

She soon disencumbered herself from her weeds, and put on a ridinghood, a coarse apron, and short petticoats, and has turned a large manor into a farm, of which she takes the management wholly upon herself. She rises before the sun to order the horses to their gears, and sees them well rubbed down at their return from work; she attends the dairy morning and evening, and watches when a calf falls that it may be carefully nursed; she walks out among the sheep at noon, counts the lambs, and observes the fences, and, where she finds a gap, stops it with a bush till it can be better mended. In harvest she rides a-field in the waggon, and is very liberal of her ale from a wooden

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bottle. At her leisure hours she looks goose eggs, airs the wool-room and turns the cheese.

When respect or curiosity brings visitants to her house, she entertains them with prognosticks of a scarcity of wheat, or a rot among the sheep, and always thinks herself privileged to dismiss them, when she is to see the hogs fed, or to count her poultry on the roost.

The only things neglected about her are her children, whom she has taught nothing but the lowest household duties. In my last visit I met miss Busy carrying grains to a sick cow, and was entertained with the accomplishments of her eldest son, a youth of such early maturity, that though he is only sixteen, she can trust him to sell corn in the market. Her younger daughter, who is eminent for her beauty, though somewhat tanned in making hay, was busy in pouring out ale to the ploughmen, that every one might have an equal share.

I could not but look with pity on this young family, doomed by the absurd prudence of their mother to ignorance and meanness: but when I recommended a more elegant education, was answered, that she never saw bookish or finical people grow rich, and that she was good for nothing herself till she had forgotten the nicety of the boarding-school.

I am, yours, &c.

BUCOLUS.

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N°. 139. TUESDAY, JULY 16, 1751.

——*Sit quod vis simplex duntaxat et unum.* Hor. Art. Poet. 23.

Let ev'ry piece be simple and be one.

It is required by Aristotle to the perfection of a tragedy, and is equally necessary to every other species of regular composition, that it should have a beginning, a middle, and an end. "The beginning," says he, "is that which hath nothing necessarily previous, but to which that which follows is naturally consequent; the end, on the contrary, is that which by necessity, or, at least, according to the common course of things, succeeds something else, but which implies nothing consequent to itself; the middle is connected on one side to something that naturally goes before, and on the other to something that naturally follows it."

Such is the rule laid down by this great critick, for the disposition of the different parts of a well-constituted fable. It must begin where it may be made intelligible without introduction; and end where the mind is left in repose, without expectation of any farther event. The intermediate passages must join the last effect to the first cause by a regular and unbroken concatenation; nothing must be, therefore, inserted, which does not apparently arise from something foregoing, and properly make way for something that succeeds it.

This precept is to be understood in its rigour only with respect to great and essential events, and cannot be extended in the same force to minuter circumstances and arbitrary decorations, which yet are more happy, as they contribute more to the main design; for it is always a proof of extensive thought and accurate circumspection, to promote various purposes by the same act; and the idea of an ornament admits use, though it seems to exclude necessity.

Whoever purposes, as it is expressed by Milton, *to build the lofty rhyme*, must acquaint himself with this law of poetical architecture, and take care that his edifice be

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solid as well as beautiful; that nothing stand single or independent, so as that it may be taken away without injuring the rest; but that, from the foundation to the pinnacles, one part rest firm upon another.

The regular and consequential distribution is among common authors frequently neglected; but the failures of those, whose example can have no influence, may be safely overlooked, nor is it of much use to recall obscure and unregarded names to memory for the sake of sporting with their infamy. But if there be any writer whose genius can embellish impropriety, and whose authority can make errour venerable, his works are the proper objects of critical inquisition. To expunge faults where there are no excellencies is a task equally useless with that of the chymist, who employs the arts of separation and refinement upon ore in which no precious metal is contained to reward his operations.

The tragedy of Samson Agonistes has been celebrated as the second work of the great author of Paradise Lost, and opposed, with all the confidence of triumph, to the dramatick performances of other nations. It contains, indeed, just sentiments, maxims of wisdom, and oracles of piety, and many passages written with the ancient spirit of choral poetry, in which there is a just and pleasing mixture of Seneca's moral declamation, with the wild enthusiasm of the Greek writers. It is, therefore, worthy of examination, whether a performance thus illuminated with genius, and enriched with learning, is composed according to the indispensable laws of Aristotelian criticism: and, omitting, at present, all other considerations, whether it exhibits a beginning, a middle, and an end.

The beginning is undoubtedly beautiful and proper, opening with a graceful abruptness, and proceeding naturally to a mournful recital of facts necessary to be known:

Samson. A little onward lend thy guiding hand
To these dark steps, a little farther on;
For yonder bank hath choice of sun and shade:
There I am wont to sit when any chance

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Relieves me from my task of servile toil,
Daily in the common prison else enjoin'd me.—
O, wherefore was my birth from heav'n foretold
Twice by an angel?—
Why was my breeding order'd and prescrib'd,
As of a person separate to God,
Design'd for great exploits; if I must die
Betray'd, captiv'd, and both my eyes put out?—
Whom have I to complain of but myself?
Who this high gift of strength committed to me,
In what part lodg'd, how easily bereft me,
Under the seal of silence could not keep:
But weakly to a woman must reveal it.

His soliloquy is interrupted by a chorus or company of men of his own tribe, who condole his miseries, extenuate his fault, and conclude with a solemn vindication of divine justice. So that at the conclusion of the first act there is no design laid, no discovery made, nor any disposition formed towards the subsequent event.

In the second act, Manoah, the father of Samson, comes to seek his son, and, being shown him by the chorus, breaks out into lamentations of his misery, and comparisons of his present with his former state, representing to him the ignominy which his religion suffers, by the festival this day celebrated in honour of Dagon, to whom the idolaters ascribed his overthrow:

——Thou bear'st
Enough, and more, the burthen of that fault;
Bitterly hast thou paid, and still art paying
That rigid score. A worse thing yet remains,
This day the Philistines a popular feast
Here celebrate in Gaza; and proclaim
Great pomp, and sacrifice, and praises loud
To Dagon, as their God who hath deliver'd
Thee, Samson, bound and blind, into their hands,
Them out of thine, who slew'st them many a slain.

Samson, touched with this reproach, makes a reply equally penitential and pious, which his father considers as the effusion of prophetick confidence:

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Samson. ———He, be sure,
Will not connive, or linger, thus provok'd,
But will arise and his great name assert:
Dagon must stoop, and shall ere long receive
Such a discomfit, as shall quite despoil him
Of all these boasted trophies won on me.

Manoah. With cause this hope relieves thee, and these words
I as a prophecy receive; for God,
Nothing more certain, will not long defer
To vindicate the glory of his name.

This part of the dialogue, as it might tend to animate or exasperate Samson, cannot, I think, be censured as wholly superfluous; but the succeeding dispute, in which Samson contends to die, and which his father breaks off, that he may go to solicit his release, is only valuable for its own beauties, and has no tendency to introduce any thing that follows it.

The next event of the drama is the arrival of Delilah, with all her graces, artifices, and allurements. This produces a dialogue, in a very high degree elegant and instructive, from which she retires, after she has exhausted her persuasions, and is no more seen nor heard of; nor has her visit any effect but that of raising the character of Samson.

In the fourth act enters Harapha, the giant of Gath, whose name had never been mentioned before, and who has now no other motive of coming, than to see the man whose strength and actions are so loudly celebrated:

Haraph. ———Much I have heard
Of thy prodigious might and feats perform'd,
Incredible to me; in this displeas'd,
That I was never present in the place
Of those encounters, where we might have tried
Each other's force in camp or listed fields;
And now am come to see of whom such noise
Hath walk'd about, and each limb to survey,
If thy appearance answer loud report.

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Samson challenges him to the combat; and, after an interchange of reproaches, elevated by repeated defiance on one side, and imbittered by contemptuous insults on the other, Harapha retires; we then hear it determined by Samson, and the chorus, that no consequence, good or bad, will proceed from their interview:

Chorus. He will directly to the lords, I fear,
And with malicious counsel stir them up
Some way or other yet farther to afflict thee.
Sams. He must allege some cause, and offer'd fight
Will not dare mention, lest a question rise
Whether he durst accept the offer or not;
And, that he durst not, plain enough appear'd.

At last, in the fifth act, appears a messenger from the lords assembled at the festival of Dagon, with a summons by which Samson is required to come and entertain them with some proof of his strength. Samson, after a short expostulation, dismisses him with a firm and resolute refusal; but, during the absence of the messenger, having awhile defended the propriety of his conduct, he at last declares himself moved by a secret impulse to comply, and utters some dark presages of a great event to be brought to pass by his agency, under the direction of providence:

Sams. Be of good courage, I begin to feel
Some rousing motions in me, which dispose
To something extraordinary my thoughts.
I with this messenger will go along,
Nothing to do, be sure, that may dishonour
Our law, or stain my vow of Nazarite.
If there be aught of presage in the mind,
This day will be remarkable in my life
By some great act, or of my days the last.

While Samson is conducted off by the messenger, his father returns with hopes of success in his solicitation, upon which he confers with the chorus till their dialogue is interrupted, first by a shout of triumph, and afterwards by screams of horrour and agony. As they stand deliberating

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where they shall be secure, a man who had been present at the show enters, and relates how Samson, having prevailed on his guide to suffer him to lean against the main pillars of the theatrical edifice, tore down the roof upon the spectators and himself:

> ———Those two massy pillars,
> With horrible confusion, to and fro
> He tugg'd, he shook, till down they came, and drew
> The whole roof after them, with burst of thunder
> Upon the heads of all who sat beneath———
> Samson, with these immixt, inevitably
> Pull'd down the same destruction on himself.

This is undoubtedly a just and regular catastrophe, and the poem, therefore, has a beginning and an end which Aristotle himself could not have disapproved; but it must be allowed to want a middle, since nothing passes between the first act and the last, that either hastens or delays the death of Samson. The whole drama, if its superfluities were cut off, would scarcely fill a single act; yet this is the tragedy which ignorance has admired, and bigotry applauded.

N°. 140. SATURDAY, JULY 20, 1751.

> ——*Quis tam Lucili fautor inepte est,*
> *Ut non hoc fateatur?* Hor. Lib. i. Sat. x. 2.
> What doating bigot, to his faults so blind,
> As not to grant me this, can Milton find?

It is common, says Bacon, to desire the end without enduring the means. Every member of society feels and acknowledges the necessity of detecting crimes, yet scarce any degree of virtue or reputation is able to secure an informer from publick hatred. The learned world has always admitted the usefulness of critical disquisitions, yet he that attempts to show, however modestly, the failures of a celebrated writer, shall surely irritate his admirers, and incur the imputation of envy, captiousness, and malignity.

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With this danger full in my view, I shall proceed to examine the sentiments of Milton's tragedy, which, though much less liable to censure than the disposition of his plan, are, like those of other writers, sometimes exposed to just exceptions for want of care, or want of discernment.

Sentiments are proper and improper as they consist more or less with the character and circumstances of the person to whom they are attributed, with the rules of the composition in which they are found, or with the settled and unalterable nature of things.

It is common among the tragick poets to introduce their persons alluding to events or opinions, of which they could not possibly have any knowledge. The barbarians of remote or newly discovered regions often display their skill in European learning. The god of love is mentioned in Tamerlane with all the familiarity of a Roman epigrammatist; and a late writer has put Harvey's doctrine of the circulation of the blood into the mouth of a Turkish statesman, who lived near two centuries before it was known even to philosophers or anatomists.

Milton's learning, which acquainted him with the manners of the ancient eastern nations, and his invention, which required no assistance from the common cant of poetry, have preserved him from frequent outrages of local or chronological propriety. Yet he has mentioned chalybean steel, of which it is not very likely that his chorus should have heard, and has made Alp the general name of a mountain, in a region where the Alps could scarcely be known:

> No medicinal liquor can assuage,
> Nor breath of cooling air from snowy Alp.

He has taught Samson the tales of Circe, and the Syrens, at which he apparently hints in his colloquy with Delilah:

> ——I know thy trains,
> Though dearly to my cost, thy gins, and toils;
> Thy fair *enchanted cup*, and *warbling charms*,
> No more on me have pow'r.

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But the grossest errour of this kind is the solemn introduction of the phœnix in the last scene; which is faulty, not only as it is incongruous to the personage to whom it is ascribed, but as it is so evidently contrary to reason and nature, that it ought never to be mentioned but as a fable in any serious poem:

——Virtue giv'n for lost,
Deprest, and overthrown, as seem'd,
Like that self-begotten bird
In the Arabian woods embost,
That no second knows nor third,
And lay ere while a holocaust,
From out her ashy womb now teem'd,
Revives, reflourishes, then vigorous most
When most unactive deem'd,
And though her body die, her fame survives
A secular bird, ages of lives.

Another species of impropriety is the unsuitableness of thoughts to the general character of the poem. The seriousness and solemnity of tragedy necessarily reject all pointed or epigrammatical expressions, all remote conceits and opposition of ideas. Samson's complaint is therefore too elaborate to be natural:

As in the land of darkness, yet in light,
To live a life half dead, a living death,
And bury'd; but, O yet more miserable!
Myself my sepulchre, a moving grave,
Buried, yet not exempt,
By privilege of death and burial,
From worst of other evils, pains and wrongs.

All allusions to low and trivial objects, with which contempt is usually associated, are doubtless unsuitable to a species of composition which ought to be always awful, though not always magnificent. The remark, therefore, of the chorus on good and bad news seems to want elevation:

Manoah. A little stay will bring some notice hither.
Chor. Of good or bad so great, of bad the sooner;
For evil news *rides post*, while good news *baits*.

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But of all meanness, that has least to plead which is produced by mere verbal conceits, which, depending only upon sounds, lose their existence by the change of a syllable. Of this kind is the following dialogue:

Chor. But had we best retire? I see a *storm.*
Sams. Fair days have oft contracted wind and rain.
Chor. But this another kind of tempest brings.
Sams. Be less abstruse, my riddling days are past.
Chor. Look now for no enchanting voice, nor fear
The bait of honied words; a rougher tongue
Draws hitherward; I know him by his stride,
The giant *Harapha.*——

And yet more despicable are the lines in which Manoah's paternal kindness is commended by the chorus:

Fathers are wont to *lay up* for their sons,
Thou for thy son art bent to *lay out* all.

Samson's complaint of the inconveniencies of imprisonment is not wholly without verbal quaintness:

——I, a prisoner chain'd, scarce freely draw
The air, imprison'd also, close and damp.

From the sentiments we may properly descend to the consideration of the language, which, in imitation of the ancients, is through the whole dialogue remarkably simple and unadorned, seldom heightened by epithets, or varied by figures; yet sometimes metaphors find admission, even where their consistency is not accurately preserved. Thus Samson confounds loquacity with a shipwreck:

How could I once look up, or heave the head,
Who like a foolish *pilot,* have *shipwreck'd*
My *vessel* trusted to me from above,
Gloriously *rigg'd;* and for a word, a tear,
Fool! have *divulg'd* the *secret gift* of God
To a deceitful woman?——

And the chorus talks of adding fuel to flame in a report:

He's gone, and who knows how he may *report*
Thy *words,* by *adding fuel to the flame?*

The versification is in the dialogue much more smooth

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and harmonious, than in the parts allotted to the chorus, which are often so harsh and dissonant, as scarce to preserve, whether the lines end with or without rhymes, any appearance of metrical regularity:

Or do my eyes misrepresent? Can this be he,
That heroic that renown'd,
Irresistible Samson? whom unarm'd
No strength of man, or fiercest wild beast, could withstand;
Who tore the lion, as the lion tears the kid.

Since I have thus pointed out the faults of Milton, critical integrity requires that I should endeavour to display his excellencies, though they will not easily be discovered in short quotations, because they consist in the justness of diffuse reasonings, or in the contexture and method of continued dialogues; this play having none of those descriptions, similes, or splendid sentences, with which other tragedies are so lavishly adorned.

Yet some passages may be selected which seem to deserve particular notice, either as containing sentiments of passion, representations of life, precepts of conduct, or sallies of imagination. It is not easy to give a stronger representation of the weariness of despondency, than in the words of Samson to his father:

——I feel my genial spirits droop,
My hopes all flat, nature within me seems
In all her functions weary of herself;
My race of glory run, and race of shame,
And I shall shortly be with them that rest.

The reply of Samson to the flattering Delilah affords a just and striking description of the stratagems and allurements of feminine hypocrisy:

———These are thy wonted arts,
And arts of every woman false like thee,
To break all faith, all vows, deceive, betray;
Then as repentant to submit, beseech,
And reconcilement move with feign'd remorse,
Confess and promise wonders in her change;
Not truly penitent, but chief to try

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sufficient, without any precise regulation of the rest of his dress.

But wigs and boots and snuffboxes are vain, without a perpetual resolution to be merry, and who can always find supplies of mirth? Juvenal, indeed, in his comparison of the two opposite philosophers, wonders only whence an unexhausted fountain of tears could be discharged: but had Juvenal, with all his spirit, undertaken my province, he would have found constant gaiety equally difficult to be supported. Consider, Mr. Rambler, and compassionate the condition of a man, who has taught every company to expect from him a continual feast of laughter, an uninterrmitted stream of jocularity. The task of every other slave has an end. The rower in time reaches the port; the lexicographer at last finds the conclusion of his alphabet; only the hapless wit has his labour always to begin, the call for novelty is never satisfied, and one jest only raises expectation of another.

I know that among men of learning and asperity the retainers to the female world are not much regarded: yet I cannot but hope that if you knew at how dear a rate our honours are purchased, you would look with some gratulation on our success, and with some pity on our miscarriages. Think on the misery of him who is condemned to cultivate barrenness and ransack vacuity; who is obliged to continue his talk when his meaning is spent, to raise merriment without images, to harass his imagination in quest of thoughts which he cannot start, and his memory in pursuit of narratives which he cannot overtake; observe the effort with which he strains to conceal despondency by a smile, and the distress in which he sits while the eyes of the company are fixed upon him as the last refuge from silence and dejection.

It were endless to recount the shifts to which I have been reduced, or to enumerate the different species of artificial wit. I regularly frequented coffee-houses, and have often lived a week upon an expression, of which he who dropped it did not know the value. When fortune

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did not favour my erratick industry, I gleaned jests at home from obsolete farces. To collect wit was indeed safe, for I consorted with none that looked much into books, but to disperse it was the difficulty. A seeming negligence was often useful, and I have very successfully made a reply not to what the lady had said, but to what it was convenient for me to hear; for very few were so perverse as to rectify a mistake which had given occasion to a burst of merriment. Sometimes I drew the conversation up by degrees to a proper point, and produced a conceit which I had treasured up, like sportsmen who boast of killing the foxes which they lodge in the covert. Eminence is, however, in some happy moments, gained at less expense; I have delighted a whole circle at one time with a series of quibbles, and made myself good company at another, by scalding my fingers, or mistaking a lady's lap for my own chair.

These are artful deceits and useful expedients; but expedients are at length exhausted, and deceits detected. Time itself, among other injuries, diminishes the power of pleasing, and I now find, in my forty-fifth year, many pranks and pleasantries very coldly received, which had formerly filled a whole room with jollity and acclamation. I am under the melancholy necessity of supporting that character by study, which I gained by levity, having learned too late that gaiety must be recommended by higher qualities, and that mirth can never please long but as the efflorescence of a mind loved for its luxuriance, but esteemed for its usefulness.

I am, &c.

PAPILIUS.

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N°. 142. SATURDAY, JULY 27, 1751.

Ἔνθα δ' ἀνὴρ ἐνίαυε πελώριος——
——οὐδὲ, μετ' ἄλλους
Πωλεῖτ', ἀλλ' ἀπάνευθεν ἰὼν ἀθεμίστια ἴδη.
Καὶ γὰρ θαῦμ' ἐτέτυκτο πελώριον· οὐδὲ ἐῴκει
Ἀνδρί γε σιτοφάγῳ. HOMER. Od. I'. 187.

A giant shepherd here his flock maintains
Far from the rest, and solitary reigns,
In shelter thick of horrid shade reclin'd;
And gloomy mischiefs labour in the mind.
A form enormous! far unlike the race
Of human birth, in stature or in face. POPE.

TO THE RAMBLER.

SIR,

HAVING been accustomed to retire annually from the town, I lately accepted the invitation of Eugenio, who has an estate and seat in a distant county. As we were unwilling to travel without improvement, we turned often from the direct road to please ourselves with the view of nature or of art; we examined every wild mountain and medicinal spring, criticised every edifice, contemplated every ruin, and compared every scene of action with the narratives of historians. By this succession of amusements we enjoyed the exercise of a journey without suffering the fatigue, and had nothing to regret but that, by a progress so leisurely and gentle, we missed the adventures of a post-chaise, and the pleasure of alarming villages with the tumult of our passage, and of disguising our insignificancy by the dignity of hurry.

The first week after our arrival at Eugenio's house was passed in receiving visits from his neighbours, who crowded about him with all the eagerness of benevolence; some impatient to learn the news of the court and town, that they might be qualified by authentick information to dictate to the rural politicians on the next bowling day; others desirous of his interest to accommodate disputes, or of his advice in the settlement of their fortunes, and the marriage of their children.

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The civilities which he had received were soon to be returned; and I passed some time with great satisfaction in roving through the country, and viewing the seats, gardens, and plantations, which are scattered over it. My pleasure would, indeed, have been greater had I been sometimes allowed to wander in a park or wilderness alone; but to appear as the friend of Eugenio was an honour not to be enjoyed without some inconveniencies: so much was every one solicitous for my regard, that I could seldom escape to solitude, or steal a moment from the emulation of complaisance, and the vigilance of officiousness.

In these rambles of good neighbourhood, we frequently passed by a house of unusual magnificence. While I had my curiosity yet distracted among many novelties, it did not much attract my observation; but in a short time I could not forbear surveying it with particular notice; for the length of the wall which inclosed the gardens, the disposition of the shades that waved over it, and the canals of which I could obtain some glimpses through the trees from our own windows, gave me reason to expect more grandeur and beauty than I had yet seen in that province. I therefore inquired, as we rode by it, why we never, amongst our excursions, spent an hour where there was such an appearance of splendour and affluence? Eugenio told me that the seat which I so much admired, was commonly called in the country the *haunted house*, and that no visits were paid there by any of the gentlemen whom I had yet seen. As the haunts of incorporeal beings are generally ruinous, neglected, and desolate, I easily conceived that there was something to be explained, and told him that I supposed it only fairy ground, on which we might venture by day light without danger. The danger, says he, is indeed only that of appearing to solicit the acquaintance of a man, with whom it is not possible to converse without infamy, and who has driven from him, by his insolence or malignity, every human being who can live without him.

Our conversation was then accidentally interrupted; but my inquisitive humour being now in motion, could not

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rest without a full account of this newly-discovered prodigy. I was soon informed that the fine house and spacious gardens were haunted by squire Bluster, of whom it was very easy to learn the character, since nobody had regard for him sufficient to hinder them from telling whatever they could discover.

Squire Bluster is descended of an ancient family. The estate which his ancestors had immemorially possessed was much augmented by captain Bluster, who served under Drake in the reign of Elizabeth; and the Blusters, who were before only petty gentlemen, have from that time frequently represented the shire in parliament, been chosen to present addresses, and given laws at hunting-matches and races. They were eminently hospitable and popular, till the father of this gentleman died of a fever, which he caught in the crowd of an election. His lady went to the grave soon after him, and left the heir, then only ten years old, to the care of his grandmother, who would not suffer him to be controlled, because she could not bear to hear him cry; and never sent him to school, because she was not able to live without his company. She taught him, however, very early to inspect the steward's accounts, to dog the butler from the cellar, and to catch the servants at a junket; so that he was at the age of eighteen a complete master of all the lower arts of domestick policy, had often on the road detected combinations between the coachman and the ostler, and procured the discharge of nineteen maids for illicit correspondence with cottagers and charwomen.

By the opportunities of parsimony which minority affords, and which the probity of his guardians had diligently improved, a very large sum of money was accumulated, and he found himself, when he took his affairs into his own hands, the richest man in the county. It has been long the custom of this family to celebrate the heir's completion of his twenty-first year, by an entertainment, at which the house is thrown open to all that are inclined to enter it, and the whole province flocks together as to a general festivity. On this occasion young Bluster exhibited the

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first tokens of his future eminence, by shaking his purse at an old gentleman who had been the intimate friend of his father, and offering to wager a greater sum than he could afford to venture; a practice with which he has, at one time or other, insulted every freeholder within ten miles round him.

His next acts of offence were committed in a contentious and spiteful vindication of the privileges of his manors, and a rigorous and relentless prosecution of every man that presumed to violate his game. As he happens to have no estate adjoining equal to his own, his oppressions are often borne without resistance, for fear of a long suit, of which he delights to count the expenses without the least solicitude about the event; for he knows, that where nothing but an honorary right is contested, the poorer antagonist must always suffer, whatever shall be the last decision of the law.

By the success of some of these disputes, he has so elated his insolence, and, by reflection upon the general hatred which they have brought upon him, so irritated his virulence, that his whole life is spent in meditating or executing mischief. It is his common practice to procure his hedges to be broken in the night, and then to demand satisfaction for damages which his grounds have suffered from his neighbour's cattle. An old widow was yesterday soliciting Eugenio to enable her to replevin her only cow, then in the pound by squire Bluster's order, who had sent one of his agents to take advantage of her calamity, and persuade her to sell the cow at an under rate. He has driven a day-labourer from his cottage, for gathering blackberries in a hedge for his children, and has now an old woman in the county gaol for a trespass which she committed, by coming into his grounds to pick up acorns for her hog.

Money, in whatever hands, will confer power. Distress will fly to immediate refuge, without much consideration of remote consequences. Bluster has therefore a despotick authority in many families, whom he has assisted, on

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pressing occasions, with larger sums than they can easily repay. The only visits that he makes are to these houses of misfortune, where he enters with the insolence of absolute command, enjoys the terrours of the family, exacts their obedience, riots at their charge, and in the height of his joy insults the father with menaces, and the daughters with obscenity.

He is of late somewhat less offensive; for one of his debtors, after gentle expostulations, by which he was only irritated to grosser outrage, seized him by the sleeve, led him trembling into the court-yard, and closed the door upon him in a stormy night. He took his usual revenge next morning by a writ; but the debt was discharged by the assistance of Eugenio.

It is his rule to suffer his tenants to owe him rent, because by this indulgence he secures to himself the power of seizure whenever he has an inclination to amuse himself with calamity, and feast his ears with entreaties and lamentations. Yet, as he is sometimes capriciously liberal to those whom he happens to adopt as favourites, and lets his lands at a cheap rate, his farms are never long unoccupied; and when one is ruined by oppression, the possibility of better fortune quickly lures another to supply his place.

Such is the life of squire Bluster; a man in whose power fortune has liberally placed the means of happiness, but who has defeated all her gifts of their end by the depravity of his mind. He is wealthy without followers; he is magnificent without witnesses; he has birth without alliance, and influence without dignity. His neighbours scorn him as a brute; his dependants dread him as an oppressor; and he has only the gloomy comfort of reflecting, that if he is hated, he is likewise feared.

I am, sir, &c.

VAGULUS.

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N°. 143. TUESDAY, JULY 30, 1751.

——*Moveat cornicula risum*
Furtivis nudata coloribus.—— HOR. Lib. i. Ep. iv. 19.

Lest when the birds their various colours claim,
Stripp'd of his stolen pride, the crow forlorn
Should stand the laughter of the publick scorn. FRANCIS.

AMONG the innumerable practices by which interest or envy have taught those who live upon literary fame to disturb each other at their airy banquets, one of the most common is the charge of plagiarism. When the excellence of a new composition can no longer be contested, and malice is compelled to give way to the unanimity of applause, there is yet this one expedient to be tried, by which the author may be degraded, though his work be reverenced; and the excellence which we cannot obscure, may be set at such a distance as not to overpower our fainter lustre.

This accusation is dangerous, because, even when it is false, it may be sometimes urged with probability. Bruyere declares, that we are come into the world too late to produce any thing new, that nature and life are preoccupied, and that description and sentiment have been long exhausted. It is, indeed, certain, that whoever attempts any common topick, will find unexpected coincidences of his thoughts with those of other writers; nor can the nicest judgment always distinguish accidental similitude from artful imitation. There is, likewise, a common stock of images, a settled mode of arrangement, and a beaten track of transition, which all authors suppose themselves at liberty to use, and which produce the resemblance generally observable among contemporaries. So that in books which best deserve the name of originals, there is little new beyond the disposition of materials already provided; the same ideas and combinations of ideas have been long in the possession of other hands; and, by restoring to every man his own, as the Romans must have

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returned to their cots from the possession of the world, so the most inventive and fertile genius would reduce his folios to a few pages. Yet the author who imitates his predecessors only by furnishing himself with thoughts and elegancies out of the same general magazine of literature, can with little more propriety be reproached as a plagiary, than the architect can be censured as a mean copier of Angelo or Wren, because he digs his marble from the same quarry, squares his stones by the same art, and unites them in columns of the same orders.

Many subjects fall under the consideration of an author, which, being limited by nature, can admit only of slight and accidental diversities. All definitions of the same thing must be nearly the same; and descriptions, which are definitions of a more lax and fanciful kind, must always have, in some degree, that resemblance to each other which they all have to their object. Different poets describing the spring or the sea would mention the zephyrs and the flowers, the billows and the rocks; reflecting on human life, they would, without any communication of opinions, lament the deceitfulness of hope, the fugacity of pleasure, the fragility of beauty, and the frequency of calamity; and for palliatives of these incurable miseries, they would concur in recommending kindness, temperance, caution, and fortitude.

When, therefore, there are found in Virgil and Horace two similar passages—

Hæ tibi erunt artes———
Parcere subjectis, et debellare superbos. VIRG.

To tame the proud, the fetter'd slave to free;
These are imperial arts, and worthy thee. DRYDEN.

Imperet bellante prior, jacentem
Lænis in hostem. HOR.

Let Cæsar spread his conquests far,
Less pleas'd to triumph than to spare—

it is surely not necessary to suppose with a late critick, that one is copied from the other, since neither Virgil nor

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Horace can be supposed ignorant of the common duties of humanity, and the virtue of moderation in success.

Cicero and Ovid have, on very different occasions, remarked how little of the honour of a victory belongs to the general, when his soldiers and his fortune have made their deductions; yet why should Ovid be suspected to have owed to Tully an observation which, perhaps, occurs to every man that sees or hears of military glories?

Tully observes of Achilles, that had not Homer written, his valour had been without praise:

Nisi Ilias illa extitisset, idem tumulus qui corpus ejus contexerat, nomen ejus obruisset.

Unless the Iliad had been published, his name had been lost in the tomb that covered his body.

Horace tells us, with more energy, that there were brave men before the wars of Troy, but they were lost in oblivion for want of a poet:

Vixere fortes ante Agamemnona
Multi; sed omnes illachrymabiles
Urgentur, ignotique longa
Nocte, carent quia vate sacro.

Before great Agamemnon reign'd,
Reign'd kings as great as he, and brave,
Whose huge ambition's now contain'd
In the small compass of a grave:
In endless night they sleep, unwept, unknown:
No bard had they to make all time their own. FRANCIS.

Tully inquires, in the same oration, why, but for fame, we disturb a short life with so many fatigues?

Quid est quod in hoc tam exiguo vitæ curriculo et tam brevi, tantis nos in laboribus exerceamus?

Why in so small a circuit of life should we employ ourselves in so many fatigues?

Horace inquires in the same manner,

Quid brevi fortes jaculamur ævo
Multa?

Why do we aim, with eager strife,
At things beyond the mark of life? FRANCIS.

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when our life is of so short duration, why we form such numerous designs? But Horace, as well as Tully, might discover that records are needful to preserve the memory of actions, and that no records were so durable as poems; either of them might find out that life is short, and that we consume it in unnecessary labour.

There are other flowers of fiction so widely scattered and so easily cropped, that it is scarcely just to tax the use of them as an act by which any particular writer is despoiled of his garland; for they may be said to have been planted by the ancients in the open road of poetry for the accommodation of their successors, and to be the right of every one that has art to pluck them without injuring their colours or their fragrance. The passage of Orpheus to hell, with the recovery and second loss of Eurydice, have been described after Boetius by Pope, in such a manner as might justly leave him suspected of imitation, were not the images such as they might both have derived from more ancient writers:

Quæ sontes agitant metu
Ultrices scelerum deæ
Jam mœstæ lacrymis madent,
Non Ixionium caput
Velox præcipitat rota.

The pow'rs of vengeance, while they hear,
Touch'd with compassion, drop a tear:
Ixion's rapid wheel is bound,
Fix'd in attention to the sound. F. Lewis.

Thy stone, O Sysiphus, stands still,
Ixion rests upon his wheel,
And the pale spectres dance!
The furies sink upon their iron beds. Pope.

Tandem, vincimur, arbiter
Umbrarum, miserans, ait——
Donemus, comitem viro,
Emtam carmine, conjugem.

Subdu'd at length, hell's pitying monarch cry'd,
The song rewarding, let us yield the bride. F. Lewis.

He sung; and hell consented
To hear the poet's pray'r;
Stern Proserpine relented,
And gave him back the fair. Pope.

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Heu, noctis prope terminos
Orpheus Eurydicen suam
Vidit, perdidit, occidit.

Nor yet the golden verge of day begun,
When Orpheus, her unhappy lord,
Eurydice to life restor'd,
At once beheld, and lost, and was undone. F. Lewis.

But soon, too soon, the lover turns his eyes:
Again she falls, again she dies, she dies! Pope.

No writer can be fully convicted of imitation, except there is a concurrence of more resemblance than can be imagined to have happened by chance; as where the same ideas are conjoined without any natural series or necessary coherence, or where not only the thought but the words are copied. Thus it can scarcely be doubted, that in the first of the following passages Pope remembered Ovid, and that in the second he copied Crashaw:

Sæpe pater dixit, studium quid inutile tentas?
Mæonides nullas ipse reliquit opes——
Sponte sua carmen numeros veniebat ad aptos,
Et quod conabar scribere, versus erat. Ovid.

Quit, quit this barren trade, my father cry'd:
Ev'n Homer left no riches when he dy'd—
In verse spontaneous flow'd my native strain,
Forc'd by no sweat or labour of the brain. F. Lewis.

I left no calling for this idle trade;
No duty broke, no father disobey'd;
While yet a child, ere yet a fool to fame,
I lisp'd in numbers, for the numbers came. Pope.

——This plain floor,
Believe me, reader, can say more
Than many a braver marble can,
Here lies a truly honest man. Crashaw.

This modest stone, what few vain marbles can,
May truly say, Here lies an honest man. Pope.

Conceits, or thoughts not immediately impressed by sensible objects, or necessarily arising from the coalition or comparison of common sentiments, may be with great justice suspected whenever they are found a second time. Thus Waller probably owed to Grotius an elegant compliment:

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Here lies the learned Savil's heir,
So early wise, and lasting fair,
That none, except her years they told,
Thought her a child, or thought her old. WALLER.

Unica lux ævi, genitoris gloria, nemo
Quem puerum, nemo credidit esse senem. GROT.

The age's miracle, his father's joy!
Nor old you would pronounce him, nor a boy. F. LEWIS.

And Prior was indebted for a pretty illustration to Alleyne's poetical history of Henry the seventh:

For nought but light itself, itself can show,
And only kings can write what kings can do. ALLEYNE.

Your musick's pow'r, your musick must disclose,
For what light is, 'tis only light that shows. PRIOR.

And with yet more certainty may the same writer be censured, for endeavouring the clandestine appropriation of a thought which he borrowed, surely without thinking himself disgraced, from an epigram of Plato:

Τῇ Παφίῃ τὸ κάτοπτρον· ἔπει τοίη μὲν ὁρᾶσθαι
Οὐκ ἔθελω, οἵη δ' ἦν πάρος, οὐ δύναμαι.

Venus, take my votive glass,
Since I am not what I was;
What from this day I shall be,
Venus, let me never see.

As not every instance of similitude can be considered as a proof of imitation, so not every imitation ought to be stigmatized as plagiarism. The adoption of a noble sentiment, or the insertion of a borrowed ornament, may sometimes display so much judgment as will almost compensate for invention: and an inferior genius may, without any imputation of servility, pursue the path of the ancients, provided he declines to tread in their footsteps.

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Nº. 144. SATURDAY, AUGUST 3, 1751.

———*Daphnidis arcum*
Fregisti et calamos: quæ tu, perverse Menalca,
Et quum vidisti puero donata, dolebas;
Et, si non aliqua nocuisses, mortuus esses. VIRG. Ec. iii. 12.

The bow of Daphnis and the shafts you broke;
When the fair boy receiv'd the gift of right;
And but for mischief, you had dy'd for spite. DRYDEN.

IT is impossible to mingle in conversation without observing the difficulty with which a new name makes its way into the world. The first appearance of excellence unites multitudes against it; unexpected opposition rises up on every side; the celebrated and the obscure join in the confederacy; subtlety furnishes arms to impudence, and invention leads on credulity.

The strength and unanimity of this alliance is not easily conceived. It might be expected that no man should suffer his heart to be inflamed with malice, but by injuries; that none should busy himself in contesting the pretensions of another, but when some right of his own was involved in the question; that at least hostilities, commenced without cause, should quickly cease; that the armies of malignity should soon disperse, when no common interest could be found to hold them together; and that the attack upon a rising character should be left to those who had something to hope or fear from the event.

The hazards of those that aspire to eminence, would be much diminished if they had none but acknowledged rivals to encounter. Their enemies would then be few, and, what is yet of greater importance, would be known. But what caution is sufficient to ward off the blows of invisible assailants, or what force can stand against uninterrupted attacks, and a continual succession of enemies? Yet such is the state of the world, that no sooner can any man emerge from the crowd, and fix the eyes of the publick upon him, than he stands as a mark to the arrows of lurking calumny, and receives in the tumult of hostility, from

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distant and from nameless hands, wounds not always easy to be cured.

It is probable that the onset against the candidates for renown, is originally incited by those who imagine themselves in danger of suffering by their success; but, when war is once declared, volunteers flock to the standard, multitudes follow the camp only for want of employment, and flying squadrons are dispersed to every part, so pleased with an opportunity of mischief, that they toil without prospect of praise, and pillage without hope of profit.

When any man has endeavoured to deserve distinction, he will be surprised to hear himself censured where he could not expect to have been named; he will find the utmost acrimony of malice among those whom he never could have offended.

As there are to be found in the service of envy men of every diversity of temper and degree of understanding, calumny is diffused by all arts and methods of propagation. Nothing is too gross or too refined, too cruel or too trifling, to be practised; very little regard is had to the rules of honourable hostility, but every weapon is accounted lawful, and those that cannot make a thrust at life are content to keep themselves in play with petty malevolence, to tease with feeble blows and impotent disturbance.

But as the industry of observation has divided the most miscellaneous and confused assemblages into proper classes, and ranged the insects of the summer, that torment us with their drones or stings, by their several tribes; the persecutors of merit, notwithstanding their numbers, may be likewise commodiously distinguished into Roarers, Whisperers, and Moderators.

The Roarer is an enemy rather terrible than dangerous. He has no other qualification for a champion of controversy than a hardened front and strong voice. Having seldom so much desire to confute as to silence, he depends rather upon vociferation than argument, and has very little care to adjust one part of his accusation to another, to preserve decency in his language, or probability in his narratives.

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He has always a store of reproachful epithets and contemptuous appellations, ready to be produced as occasion may require, which by constant use he pours out with resistless volubility. If the wealth of a trader is mentioned, he without hesitation devotes him to bankruptcy; if the beauty and elegance of a lady be commended, he wonders how the town can fall in love with rustick deformity; if a new performance of genius happens to be celebrated, he pronounces the writer a hopeless idiot, without knowledge of books or life, and without the understanding by which it must be acquired. His exaggerations are generally without effect upon those whom he compels to hear them; and though it will sometimes happen that the timorous are awed by his violence, and the credulous mistake his confidence for knowledge, yet the opinions which he endeavours to suppress soon recover their former strength, as the trees that bend to the tempest erect themselves again when its force is past.

The Whisperer is more dangerous. He easily gains attention by a soft address, and excites curiosity by an air of importance. As secrets are not to be made cheap by promiscuous publication, he calls a select audience about him, and gratifies their vanity with an appearance of trust by communicating his intelligence in a low voice. Of the trader he can tell that, though he seems to manage an extensive commerce, and talks in high terms of the funds, yet his wealth is not equal to his reputation; he has lately suffered much by an expensive project, and had a greater share than is acknowledged in the rich ship that perished by the storm. Of the beauty he has little to say, but that they who see her in a morning do not discover all those graces which are admired in the Park. Of the writer he affirms with great certainty, that though the excellence of the work be incontestible, he can claim but a small part of the reputation; that he owed most of the images and sentiments to a secret friend; and that the accuracy and equality of the style was produced by the successive correction of the chief criticks of the age.

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As every one is pleased with imagining that he knows something not yet commonly divulged, secret history easily gains credit; but it is for the most part believed only while it circulates in whispers; and when once it is openly told, is openly confuted.

The most pernicious enemy is the man of moderation. Without interest in the question, or any motive but honest curiosity, this impartial and zealous inquirer after truth is ready to hear either side, and always disposed to kind interpretations and favourable opinions. He hath heard the trader's affairs reported with great variation, and, after a diligent comparison of the evidence, concludes it probable that the splendid superstructure of business being originally built upon a narrow basis, has lately been found to totter; but between dilatory payment and bankruptcy there is a great distance; many merchants have supported themselves by expedients for a time, without any final injury to their creditors; and what is lost by one adventure may be recovered by another. He believes that a young lady, pleased with admiration, and desirous to make perfect what is already excellent, may heighten her charms by artificial improvements, but surely most of her beauties must be genuine, and who can say that he is wholly what he endeavours to appear? The author he knows to be a man of diligence, who perhaps does not sparkle with the fire of Homer, but has the judgment to discover his own deficiencies, and to supply them by the help of others; and, in his opinion, modesty is a quality so amiable and rare, that it ought to find a patron wherever it appears, and may justly be preferred, by the publick suffrage, to petulant wit and ostentatious literature.

He who thus discovers failings with unwillingness, and extenuates the faults which cannot be denied, puts an end at once to doubt or vindication; his hearers repose upon his candour and veracity, and admit the charge without allowing the excuse.

Such are the arts by which the envious, the idle, the peevish, and the thoughtless, obstruct that worth which

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they cannot equal; and, by artifices thus easy, sordid, and detestable, is industry defeated, beauty blasted, and genius depressed.

N°. 145. TUESDAY, AUGUST 6, 1751.

Non, si priores Mæonius tenet
Sedes Homerus, Pindaricæ latent,
Cæaque, et Alcæi minaces,
Stesichorique graves Camœnæ. HOR. Lib. iv. Od. ix. 5.

What though the muse her Homer thrones
High above all th' immortal quire;
Nor Pindar's raptures she disowns,
Nor hides the plaintive Cæan lyre;
Alcæus strikes the tyrant soul with dread,
Nor yet is grave Stesichorus unread. FRANCIS.

IT is allowed that vocations and employments of least dignity are of the most apparent use; that the meanest artizan or manufacturer contributes more to the accommodation of life, than the profound scholar and argumentative theorist; and that the publick would suffer less present inconvenience from the banishment of philosophers than from the extinction of any common trade.

Some have been so forcibly struck with this observation, that they have, in the first warmth of their discovery, thought it reasonable to alter the common distribution of dignity, and ventured to condemn mankind of universal ingratitude. For justice exacts, that those by whom we are most benefited should be most honoured. And what labour can be more useful than that which procures to families and communities those necessaries which supply the wants of nature, or those conveniencies by which ease, security, and elegance, are conferred?

This is one of the innumerable theories which the first attempt to reduce them into practice certainly destroys. If we estimate dignity by immediate usefulness, agriculture is undoubtedly the first and noblest science; yet we see the plough driven, the clod broken, the manure spread,

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the seeds scattered, and the harvest reaped, by men whom those that feed upon their industry will never be persuaded to admit into the same rank with heroes or with sages; and who, after all the confessions which truth may extort in favour of their occupation, must be content to fill up the lowest class of the commonwealth, to form the base of the pyramid of subordination, and lie buried in obscurity themselves, while they support all that is splendid, conspicuous, or exalted.

It will be found upon a closer inspection, that this part of the conduct of mankind is by no means contrary to reason or equity. Remuneratory honours are proportioned at once to the usefulness and difficulty of performances, and are properly adjusted by comparison of the mental and corporeal abilities, which they appear to employ. That work, however necessary, which is carried on only by muscular strength and manual dexterity, is not of equal esteem, in the consideration of rational beings, with the tasks that exercise the intellectual powers, and require the active vigour of imagination, or the gradual and laborious investigations of reason.

The merit of all manual occupations seems to terminate in the inventor; and surely the first ages cannot be charged with ingratitude; since those who civilized barbarians, and taught them how to secure themselves from cold and hunger, were numbered amongst their deities. But these arts once discovered by philosophy, and facilitated by experience, are afterwards practised with very little assistance from the faculties of the soul; nor is any thing necessary to the regular discharge of these inferior duties, beyond that rude observation which the most sluggish intellect may practise, and that industry which the stimulations of necessity naturally enforce.

Yet, though the refusal of statues and panegyrick to those who employ only their hands and feet in the service of mankind may be easily justified, I am far from intending to incite the petulance of pride, to justify the superciliousness of grandeur, or to intercept any part of that

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tenderness and benevolence which, by the privilege of their common nature, one may claim from another.

That it would be neither wise nor equitable to discourage the husbandman, the labourer, the miner, or the smith, is generally granted; but there is another race of beings equally obscure and equally indigent, who, because their usefulness is less obvious to vulgar apprehensions, live unrewarded and die unpitied, and who have been long exposed to insult without a defender, and to censure without an apologist.

The authors of London were formerly computed by Swift at several thousands, and there is not any reason for suspecting that their number has decreased. Of these only a very few can be said to produce, or endeavour to produce, new ideas, to extend any principle of science, or gratify the imagination with any uncommon train of images, or contexture of events; the rest, however laborious, however arrogant, can only be considered as the drudges of the pen, the manufacturers of literature, who have set up for authors, either with or without a regular initiation, and, like other artificers, have no other care than to deliver their tale of wares at the stated time.

It has been formerly imagined, that he who intends the entertainment or instruction of others, must feel in himself some peculiar impulse of genius; that he must watch the happy minute in which his natural fire is excited, in which his mind is elevated with nobler sentiments, enlightened with clearer views, and invigorated with stronger comprehension; that he must carefully select his thoughts, and polish his expressions; and animate his efforts with the hope of raising a monument of learning, which neither time nor envy shall be able to destroy.

But the authors whom I am now endeavouring to recommend have been too long *hackneyed in the ways of men* to indulge the chimerical ambition of immortality; they have seldom any claim to the trade of writing, but that they have tried some other without success; they perceive no particular summons to composition, except the

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sound of the clock; they have no other rule than the law or the fashion for admitting their thoughts or rejecting them; and about the opinion of posterity they have little solicitude, for their productions are seldom intended to remain in the world longer than a week.

That such authors are not to be rewarded with praise is evident, since nothing can be admired when it ceases to exist; but surely, though they cannot aspire to honour, they may be exempted from ignominy, and adopted in that order of men which deserves our kindness, though not our reverence. These papers of the day, the *Ephemeræ* of learning, have uses more adequate to the purposes of common life than more pompous and durable volumes. If it is necessary for every man to be more acquainted with his contemporaries than with past generations, and to rather know the events which may immediately affect his fortune or quiet, than the revolutions of ancient kingdoms, in which he has neither possessions nor expectations; if it be pleasing to hear of the preferment and dismission of statesmen, the birth of heirs, and the marriage of beauties, the humble author of journals and gazettes must be considered as a liberal dispenser of beneficial knowledge.

Even the abridger, compiler, and translator, though their labours cannot be ranked with those of the diurnal historiographer, yet must not be rashly doomed to annihilation. Every size of readers requires a genius of correspondent capacity; some delight in abstracts and epitomes, because they want room in their memory for long details, and content themselves with effects, without inquiry after causes; some minds are overpowered by splendour of sentiment, as some eyes are offended by a glaring light; such will gladly contemplate an author in an humble imitation, as we look without pain upon the sun in the water.

As every writer has his use, every writer ought to have his patrons; and since no man, however high he may now stand, can be certain that he shall not be soon thrown down from his elevation by criticism or caprice, the common interest of learning requires that her sons should

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cease from intestine hostilities, and, instead of sacrificing each other to malice and contempt, endeavour to avert persecution from the meanest of their fraternity.

N°. 146. SATURDAY, AUGUST 10, 1751.

Sunt illic duo, tresve, qui revolvant
Nostrarum tineas ineptiarum:
Sed cum sponsio, fabulæque lassæ
De scorpo fuerint incitato. MART.

'Tis possible that one or two
These fooleries of mine may view;
But then the bettings must be o'er,
Nor Crab or Childers talk'd of more. F. LEWIS.

NONE of the projects or designs which exercise the mind of man are equally subject to obstructions and disappointments with the pursuit of fame. Riches cannot easily be denied to them who have something of greater value to offer in exchange; he whose fortune is endangered by litigation, will not refuse to augment the wealth of the lawyer; he whose days are darkened by languor, or whose nerves are excruciated by pain, is compelled to pay tribute to the science of healing. But praise may be always omitted without inconvenience. When once a man has made celebrity necessary to his happiness, he has put it in the power of the weakest and most timorous malignity, if not to take away his satisfaction, at least to withhold it. His enemies may indulge their pride by airy negligence, and gratify their malice by quiet neutrality. They that could never have injured a character by invectives, may combine to annihilate it by silence; as the women of Rome threatened to put an end to conquest and dominion, by supplying no children to the commonwealth.

When a writer has with long toil produced a work intended to burst upon mankind with unexpected lustre, and withdraw the attention of the learned world from every other controversy or inquiry, he is seldom contented to

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wait long without the enjoyment of his new praises. With an imagination full of his own importance, he walks out like a monarch in disguise to learn the various opinions of his readers. Prepared to feast upon admiration; composed to encounter censures without emotion; and determined not to suffer his quiet to be injured by a sensibility too exquisite of praise or blame, but to laugh with equal contempt at vain objections and injudicious commendations, he enters the places of mingled conversation, sits down to his tea in an obscure corner, and, while he appears to examine a file of antiquated journals, catches the conversation of the whole room. He listens, but hears no mention of his book, and therefore supposes that he has disappointed his curiosity by delay; and that as men of learning would naturally begin their conversation with such a wonderful novelty, they had digressed to other subjects before his arrival. The company disperses, and their places are supplied by others equally ignorant, or equally careless. The same expectation hurries him to another place, from which the same disappointment drives him soon away. His impatience then grows violent and tumultuous; he ranges over the town with restless curiosity, and hears in one quarter of a cricket-match, in another of a pickpocket; is told by some of an unexpected bankruptcy; by others of a turtle feast; is sometimes provoked by importunate inquiries after the white bear, and sometimes with praises of the dancing dog; he is afterwards entreated to give his judgment upon a wager about the height of the Monument; invited to see a foot-race in the adjacent villages; desired to read a ludicrous advertisement; or consulted about the most effectual method of making inquiry after a favourite cat. The whole world is busied in affairs which he thinks below the notice of reasonable creatures, and which are nevertheless sufficient to withdraw all regard from his labours and his merits.

He resolves at last to violate his own modesty, and to recall the talkers from their folly by an inquiry after him-

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self. He finds every one provided with an answer; one has seen the work advertised, but never met with any that had read it; another has been so often imposed upon by specious titles, that he never buys a book till its character is established; a third wonders what any man can hope to produce after so many writers of greater eminence; the next has inquired after the author, but can hear no account of him, and therefore suspects the name to be fictitious; and another knows him to be a man condemned by indigence to write too frequently what he does not understand.

Many are the consolations with which the unhappy author endeavours to allay his vexation, and fortify his patience. He has written with too little indulgence to the understanding of common readers; he has fallen upon an age in which solid knowledge, and delicate refinement, have given way to low merriment, and idle buffoonery, and therefore no writer can hope for distinction, who has any higher purpose than to raise laughter. He finds that his enemies, such as superiority will always raise, have been industrious, while his performance was in the press, to vilify and blast it; and that the bookseller, whom he had resolved to enrich, has rivals that obstruct the circulation of the copies. He at last reposes upon the consideration, that the noblest works of learning and genius have always made their way slowly against ignorance and prejudice; and that reputation, which is never to be lost, must be gradually obtained, as animals of longest life are observed not soon to attain their full stature and strength.

By such arts of voluntary delusion does every man endeavour to conceal his own unimportance from himself. It is long before we are convinced of the small proportion which every individual bears to the collective body of mankind; or learn how few can be interested in the fortune of any single man; how little vacancy is left in the world for any new object of attention; to how small extent the brightest blaze of merit can be spread amidst the mists of business and of folly; and how soon it is clouded

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by the intervention of other novelties. Not only the writer of books, but the commander of armies, and the deliverer of nations, will easily outlive all noisy and popular reputation; he may be celebrated for a time by the publick voice, but his actions and his name will soon be considered as remote and unaffecting, and be rarely mentioned but by those whose alliance gives them some vanity to gratify by frequent commemoration.

It seems not to be sufficiently considered how little renown can be admitted in the world. Mankind are kept perpetually busy by their fears or desires, and have not more leisure from their own affairs, than to acquaint themselves with the accidents of the current day. Engaged in contriving some refuge from calamity, or in shortening the way to some new possession, they seldom suffer their thoughts to wander to the past or future; none but a few solitary students have leisure to inquire into the claims of ancient heroes or sages; and names which hoped to range over kingdoms and continents, shrink at last into cloisters or colleges.

Nor is it certain, that even of these dark and narrow habitations, these last retreats of fame, the possession will be long kept. Of men devoted to literature, very few extend their views beyond some particular science, and the greater part seldom inquire, even in their own profession, for any authors but those whom the present mode of study happens to force upon their notice; they desire not to fill their minds with unfashionable knowledge, but contentedly resign to oblivion those books which they now find censured or neglected.

The hope of fame is necessarily connected with such considerations as must abate the ardour of confidence, and repress the vigour of pursuit. Whoever claims renown from any kind of excellence, expects to fill the place which is now possessed by another; for there are already names of every class sufficient to employ all that will desire to remember them; and surely he that is pushing his predecessors into the gulf of obscurity, cannot but

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sometimes suspect that he must himself sink in like manner, and, as he stands upon the same precipice, be swept away with the same violence.

It sometimes happens, that fame begins when life is at an end; but far the greater number of candidates for applause have owed their reception in the world to some favourable casualties, and have therefore immediately sunk into neglect, when death stripped them of their casual influence, and neither fortune nor patronage operated in their favour. Among those who have better claims to regard, the honour paid to their memory is commonly proportionate to the reputation which they enjoyed in their lives, though still growing fainter, as it is at a greater distance from the first emission; and since it is so difficult to obtain the notice of contemporaries, how little is it to be hoped from future times? What can merit effect by its own force, when the help of art or friendship can scarcely support it?

N°. 147. TUESDAY, AUGUST 13, 1751.

Tu nihil invita dices faciesve Minerva. HOR. Ar. Poet. 385.

———You are of too quick a sight,
Not to discern which way your talent lies. ROSCOMMON.

TO THE RAMBLER.

SIR,

As little things grow great by continual accumulation, I hope you will not think the dignity of your character impaired by an account of a ludicrous persecution, which, though it produced no scenes of horrour or of ruin, yet, by incessant importunity of vexation, wears away my happiness, and consumes those years which nature seems particularly to have assigned to cheerfulness, in silent anxiety and helpless resentment.

I am the eldest son of a gentleman, who having in-

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herited a large estate from his ancestors, and feeling no desire either to increase or lessen it, has, from the time of his marriage, generally resided at his own seat; where, by dividing his time among the duties of a father, a master, and a magistrate, the study of literature, and the offices of civility, he finds means to rid himself of the day, without any of those amusements, which all those with whom my residence in this place has made me acquainted, think necessary to lighten the burden of existence.

When my age made me capable of instruction, my father prevailed upon a gentleman, long known at Oxford for the extent of his learning and the purity of his manners, to undertake my education. The regard with which I saw him treated, disposed me to consider his instructions as important, and I therefore soon formed a habit of attention, by which I made very quick advances in different kinds of learning, and heard, perhaps too often, very flattering comparisons of my own proficiency with that of others, either less docile by nature, or less happily forwarded by instruction. I was caressed by all that exchanged visits with my father; and as young men are with little difficulty taught to judge favourably of themselves, began to think that close application was no longer necessary, and that the time was now come when I was at liberty to read only for amusement, and was to receive the reward of my fatigues in praise and admiration.

While I was thus banqueting upon my own perfections, and longing in secret to escape from tutorage, my father's brother came from London to pass a summer at his native place. A lucrative employment which he possessed, and a fondness for the conversation and diversions of the gay part of mankind, had so long kept him from rural excursions, that I had never seen him since my infancy. My curiosity was therefore strongly excited by the hope of observing a character more nearly, which I had hitherto reverenced only at a distance.

From all private and intimate conversation, I was long withheld by the perpetual confluence of visitants with

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whom the first news of my uncle's arrival crowded the house; but was amply recompensed by seeing an exact and punctilious practice of the arts of a courtier, in all the stratagems of endearment, the gradations of respect, and variations of courtesy. I remarked with what justice of distribution he divided his talk to a wide circle; with what address he offered to every man an occasion of indulging some favourite topick, or displaying some particular attainment; the judgment with which he regulated his inquiries after the absent; and the care with which he showed all the companions of his early years how strongly they were infixed in his memory, by the mention of past incidents, and the recital of puerile kindnesses, dangers, and frolicks. I soon discovered that he possessed some science of graciousness and attraction which books had not taught, and of which neither I nor my father had any knowledge; that he had the power of obliging those whom he did not benefit; that he diffused, upon his cursory behaviour and most trifling actions, a gloss of softness and delicacy by which every one was dazzled; and that, by some occult method of captivation, he animated the timorous, softened the supercilious, and opened the reserved. I could not but repine at the inelegance of my own manners, which left me no hopes but not to offend, and at the inefficacy of rustick benevolence, which gained no friends but by real service.

My uncle saw the veneration with which I caught every accent of his voice, and watched every motion of his hand; and the awkward diligence with which I endeavoured to imitate his embrace of fondness, and his bow of respect. He was, like others, easily flattered by an imitator by whom he could not fear ever to be rivalled, and repaid my assiduities with compliments and professions. Our fondness was so increased by a mutual endeavour to please each other, that when he returned to London, he declared himself unable to leave a nephew so amiable and so accomplished behind him; and obtained my father's permission to enjoy my company for a few months, by a

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promise to initiate me in the arts of politeness, and introduce me into publick life.

The courtier had little inclination to fatigue, and therefore, by travelling very slowly, afforded me time for more loose and familiar conversation; but I soon found, that by a few inquiries which he was not well prepared to satisfy, I had made him weary of his young companion. His element was a mixed assembly, where ceremony and healths, compliments and common topicks, kept the tongue employed with very little assistance from memory or reflection; but in the chariot, where he was necessitated to support a regular tenour of conversation, without any relief from a new comer, or any power of starting into gay digressions, or destroying argument by a jest, he soon discovered that poverty of ideas which had been hitherto concealed under the tinsel of politeness. The first day he entertained me with the novelties and wonders with which I should be astonished at my entrance into London, and cautioned me with apparent admiration of his own wisdom against the arts by which rusticity is frequently deluded. The same detail and the same advice he would have repeated on the second day; but as I every moment diverted the discourse to the history of the towns by which we passed, or some other subject of learning or of reason, he soon lost his vivacity, grew peevish and silent, wrapped his cloak about him, composed himself to slumber, and reserved his gaiety for fitter auditors.

At length I entered London, and my uncle was reinstated in his superiority. He awaked at once to loquacity as soon as our wheels rattled on the pavement, and told me the name of every street as we crossed it, and owner of every house as we passed by. He presented me to my aunt, a lady of great eminence for the number of her acquaintances, and splendour of her assemblies, and either in kindness or revenge consulted with her, in my presence, how I might be most advantageously dressed for my first appearance, and most expeditiously disencumbered from my villatick bashfulness. My indignation at

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familiarity thus contemptuous flushed in my face; they mistook anger for shame, and alternately exerted their eloquence upon the benefits of publick education, and the happiness of an assurance early acquired.

Assurance is, indeed, the only qualification to which they seem to have annexed merit, and assurance, therefore, is perpetually recommended to me as the supply of every defect, and the ornament of every excellence. I never sit silent in company when secret history is circulating, but I am reproached for want of assurance. If I fail to return the stated answer to a compliment; if I am disconcerted by unexpected raillery; if I blush when I am discovered gazing on a beauty, or hesitate when I find myself embarrassed in an argument; if I am unwilling to talk of what I do not understand, or timorous in undertaking offices which I cannot gracefully perform; if I suffer a more lively tatler to recount the casualties of a game, or a nimbler fop to pick up a fan, I am censured between pity and contempt, as a wretch doomed to grovel in obscurity for want of assurance.

I have found many young persons harassed in the same manner, by those to whom age has given nothing but the assurance which they recommend; and, therefore, cannot but think it useful to inform them, that cowardice and delicacy are not to be confounded; and that he whose stupidity has armed him against the shafts of ridicule, will always act and speak with greater audacity, than they whose sensibility represses their ardour, and who dare never let their confidence outgrow their abilities.

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N°. 148. SATURDAY, AUGUST 17, 1751.

Me pater sævis oneret catenis,
Quod viro clemens misero peperci:
Me vel extremos Numidarum in agros
Classe releget. HOR. Lib. iii. Od. xi. 45.

Me let my father load with chains,
Or banish to Numidia's farthest plains!
My crime, that I, a loyal wife,
In kind compassion sav'd my husband's life. FRANCIS.

POLITICIANS remark, that no oppression is so heavy or lasting as that which is inflicted by the perversion and exorbitance of legal authority. The robber may be seized, and the invader repelled, whenever they are found; they who pretend no right but that of force, may by force be punished or suppressed. But when plunder bears the name of impost, and murder is perpetrated by a judicial sentence, fortitude is intimidated, and wisdom confounded: resistance shrinks from an alliance with rebellion, and the villain remains secure in the robes of the magistrate.

Equally dangerous and equally detestable are the cruelties often exercised in private families, under the venerable sanction of parental authority; the power which we are taught to honour from the first moments of reason; which is guarded from insult and violation by all that can impress awe upon the mind of man; and which, therefore, may wanton in cruelty without control, and trample the bounds of right with innumerable transgressions, before duty and piety will dare to seek redress, or think themselves at liberty to recur to any other means of deliverance than supplications, by which insolence is elated, and tears, by which cruelty is gratified.

It was for a long time imagined by the Romans, that no son could be the murderer of his father; and they had therefore no punishment appropriated to parricide. They seem likewise to have believed with equal confidence, that no father could be cruel to his child; and therefore they allowed every man the supreme judicature in his own

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house, and put the lives of his offspring into his hands. But experience informed them by degrees, that they determined too hastily in favour of human nature; they found that instinct and habit were not able to contend with avarice or malice; that the nearest relation might be violated; and that power, to whomsoever intrusted, might be ill employed. They were, therefore, obliged to supply and to change their institutions; to deter the parricide by a new law, and to transfer capital punishments from the parent to the magistrate.

There are, indeed, many houses which it is impossible to enter familiarly, without discovering that parents are by no means exempt from the intoxications of dominion; and that he who is in no danger of hearing remonstrances but from his own conscience, will seldom be long without the art of controlling his convictions, and modifying justice by his own will.

If in any situation the heart were inaccessible to malignity, it might be supposed to be sufficiently secured by parental relation. To have voluntarily become to any being the occasion of its existence, produces an obligation to make that existence happy. To see helpless infancy stretching out her hands, and pouring out her cries in testimony of dependence, without any powers to alarm jealousy, or any guilt to alienate affection, must surely awaken tenderness in every human mind; and tenderness once excited will be hourly increased by the natural contagion of felicity, by the repercussion of communicated pleasure, by the consciousness of the dignity of benefaction. I believe no generous or benevolent man can see the vilest animal courting his regard, and shrinking at his anger, playing his gambols of delight before him, calling on him in distress, and flying to him in danger, without more kindness than he can persuade himself to feel for the wild and unsocial inhabitants of the air and water. We naturally endear to ourselves those to whom we impart any kind of pleasure, because we imagine their affection and esteem secured to us by the benefits which they receive.

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There is, indeed, another method by which the pride of superiority may be likewise gratified. He that has extinguished all the sensations of humanity, and has no longer any satisfaction in the reflection that he is loved as the distributor of happiness, may please himself with exciting terrour, as the inflicter of pain: he may delight his solitude with contemplating the extent of his power and the force of his commands; in imagining the desires that flutter on the tongue which is forbidden to utter them, or the discontent which preys on the heart in which fear confines it: he may amuse himself with new contrivances of detection, multiplications of prohibition, and varieties of punishment; and swell with exultation when he considers how little of the homage that he receives he owes to choice.

That princes of this character have been known, the history of all absolute kingdoms will inform us; and since, as Aristotle observes, ἡ οἰκονομικὴ μοναρχία, *the government of a family is naturally monarchical*, it is, like other monarchies, too often arbitrarily administered. The regal and parental tyrant differ only in the extent of their dominions, and the number of their slaves. The same passions cause the same miseries; except that seldom any prince, however despotick, has so far shaken off all awe of the publick eye, as to venture upon those freaks of injustice, which are sometimes indulged under the secrecy of a private dwelling. Capricious injunctions, partial decisions, unequal allotments, distributions of reward, not by merit, but by fancy, and punishments, regulated not by the degree of the offence, but by the humour of the judge, are too frequent where no power is known but that of a father.

That he delights in the misery of others, no man will confess, and yet what other motive can make a father cruel? The king may be instigated by one man to the destruction of another; he may sometimes think himself endangered by the virtues of a subject; he may dread the successful general or the popular orator; his avarice may point out golden confiscations; and his guilt may

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whisper that he can only be secure by cutting off all power of revenge.

But what can a parent hope from the oppression of those who were born to his protection, of those who can disturb him with no competition, who can enrich him with no spoils? Why cowards are cruel may be easily discovered; but for what reason, not more infamous than cowardice, can that man delight in oppression who has nothing to fear?

The unjustifiable severity of a parent is loaded with this aggravation, that those whom he injures are always in his sight. The injustice of a prince is often exercised upon those of whom he never had any personal or particular knowledge; and the sentence which he pronounces, whether of banishment, imprisonment, or death, removes from his view the man whom he condemns. But the domestick oppressor dooms himself to gaze upon those faces which he clouds with terrour and with sorrow; and beholds every moment the effects of his own barbarities. He that can bear to give continual pain to those who surround him, and can walk with satisfaction in the gloom of his own presence; he that can see submissive misery without relenting, and meet without emotion the eye that implores mercy, or demands justice, will scarcely be amended by remonstrance or admonition; he has found means of stopping the avenues of tenderness, and arming his heart against the force of reason.

Even though no consideration should be paid to the great law of social beings, by which every individual is commanded to consult the happiness of others, yet the harsh parent is less to be vindicated than any other criminal, because he less provides for the happiness of himself. Every man, however little he loves others, would willingly be loved; every man hopes to live long, and therefore hopes for that time at which he shall sink back to imbecility, and must depend for ease and cheerfulness upon the officiousness of others. But how has he obviated the inconveniencies of old age, who alienates from him the as-

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sistance of his children, and whose bed must be surrounded in the last hours, in the hours of languor and dejection, of impatience and of pain, by strangers to whom his life is indifferent, or by enemies to whom his death is desirable?

Piety will, indeed, in good minds, overcome provocation, and those who have been harassed by brutality will forget the injuries which they have suffered, so far as to perform the last duties with alacrity and zeal. But surely no resentment can be equally painful with kindness thus undeserved, nor can severer punishment be imprecated upon a man not wholly lost in meanness and stupidity, than, through the tediousness of decrepitude, to be reproached by the kindness of his own children, to receive not the tribute but the alms of attendance, and to owe every relief of his miseries not to gratitude but to mercy.

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N°. 149. TUESDAY, AUGUST 20, 1751.

Quod non sit Pylades hoc tempore, non sit Orestes,
Miraris? Pylades, Marce, bibebat idem.
Nec melior panis, turdusve dabatur Oresti:
Sed par, atque eadem cœna duobus erat.——
Te Cadmea Tyros, me pinguis Gallia vestit:
Vis te purpureum, Marce, sagatus amem?
Ut præstem Pyladen, aliquis mihi præstet Orestem.
Hoc non fit verbis, Marce: ut ameris, ama. MART. Lib. vi. Ep. xi.

You wonder now that no man sees
Such friends as those of ancient Greece.
Here lay the point———Orestes' meat
Was just the same his friend did eat;
Nor can it yet be found, his wine
Was better, Pylades, than thine.
In home-spun russet I am drest,
Your cloth is always of the best;
But, honest Marcus, if you please
To choose me for your Pylades,
Remember, words alone are vain;
Love———if you would be lov'd again. F. LEWIS.

TO THE RAMBLER.

SIR,

No depravity of the mind has been more frequently or justly censured than ingratitude. There is, indeed, sufficient reason for looking on those that can return evil for good, and repay kindness and assistance with hatred or neglect, as corrupted beyond the common degrees of wickedness; nor will he, who has once been clearly detected in acts of injury to his benefactor, deserve to be numbered among social beings; he has endeavoured to destroy confidence, to intercept sympathy, and to turn every man's attention wholly on himself.

There is always danger lest the honest abhorrence of a crime should raise the passions with too much violence against the man to whom it is imputed. In proportion as guilt is more enormous, it ought to be ascertained by stronger evidence. The charge against ingratitude is very general; almost every man can tell what favours he has conferred

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upon insensibility, and how much happiness he has bestowed without return; but perhaps, if these patrons and protectors were confronted with any whom they boast of having befriended, it would often appear that they consulted only their pleasure or vanity, and repaid themselves their petty donatives by gratifications of insolence and indulgence of contempt.

It has happened that much of my time has been passed in a dependent state, and consequently I have received many favours in the opinion of those at whose expense I have been maintained; yet I do not feel in my heart any burning gratitude or tumultuous affection; and, as I would not willingly suppose myself less susceptible of virtuous passions than the rest of mankind, I shall lay the history of my life before you, that you may, by your judgment of my conduct, either reform, or confirm, my present sentiments.

My father was the second son of a very ancient and wealthy family. He married a lady of equal birth, whose fortune, joined to his own, might have supported his posterity in honour; but being gay and ambitious, he prevailed on his friends to procure him a post, which gave him an opportunity of displaying his elegance and politeness. My mother was equally pleased with splendour, and equally careless of expense; they both justified their profusion to themselves, by endeavouring to believe it necessary to the extension of their acquaintance, and improvement of their interest; and whenever any place became vacant, they expected to be repaid. In the midst of these hopes my father was snatched away by an apoplexy; and my mother, who had no pleasure but in dress, equipage, assemblies, and compliments, finding that she could live no longer in her accustomed rank, sunk into dejection, and in two years wore out her life with envy and discontent.

I was sent with a sister, one year younger than myself, to the elder brother of my father. We were not yet capable of observing how much fortune influences affection, but flattered ourselves on the road with the tender-

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ness and regard with which we should be treated by our uncle. Our reception was rather frigid than malignant; we were introduced to our young cousins, and for the first month more frequently consoled than upbraided; but in a short time we found our prattle repressed, our dress neglected, our endearments unregarded, and our requests referred to the housekeeper.

The forms of decency were now violated, and every day produced new insults. We were soon brought to the necessity of receding from our imagined equality with our cousins, to whom we sunk into humble companions without choice or influence, expected only to echo their opinions, facilitate their desires, and accompany their rambles. It was unfortunate that our early introduction into polite company, and habitual knowledge of the arts of civility, had given us such an appearance of superiority to the awkward bashfulness of our relations, as naturally drew respect and preference from every stranger; and my aunt was forced to assert the dignity of her own children, while they were skulking in corners for fear of notice, and hanging down their heads in silent confusion, by relating the indiscretion of our father, displaying her own kindness, lamenting the misery of birth without estate and declaring her anxiety for our future provision, and the expedients which she had formed to secure us from those follies or crimes, to which the conjunction of pride and want often gives occasion. In a short time care was taken to prevent such vexatious mistakes; we were told, that fine clothes would only fill our heads with false expectations, and our dress was therefore accommodated to our fortune.

Childhood is not easily dejected or mortified. We felt no lasting pain from insolence or neglect; but finding that we were favoured and commended by all whose interest did not prompt them to discountenance us, preserved our vivacity and spirit to years of greater sensibility. It then became irksome and disgusting to live without any principle of action but the will of another, and we often met

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privately in the garden to lament our condition, and to ease our hearts with mutual narratives of caprice, peevishness, and affront.

There are innumerable modes of insult, and tokens of contempt, for which it is not easy to find a name, which vanish to nothing in an attempt to describe them, and yet may, by continual repetition, make day pass after day in sorrow and in terrour. Phrases of cursory compliment and established salutation may, by a different modulation of the voice, or cast of the countenance, convey contrary meanings, and be changed from indications of respect to expressions of scorn. The dependant who cultivates delicacy in himself, very little consults his own tranquillity. My unhappy vigilance is every moment discovering some petulance of accent, or arrogance of mien, some vehemence of interrogation, or quickness of reply, that recalls my poverty to my mind, and which I feel more acutely, as I know not how to resent it.

You are not, however, to imagine, that I think myself discharged from the duties of gratitude, only because my relations do not adjust their looks, or tune their voices to my expectation. The insolence of benefaction terminates not in negative rudeness or obliquities of insult. I am often told in express terms of the miseries from which charity has snatched me, while multitudes are suffered by relations equally near to devolve upon the parish; and have more than once heard it numbered among other favours, that I am admitted to the same table with my cousins.

That I sit at the first table I must acknowledge, but I sit there only that I may feel the stings of inferiority. My inquiries are neglected, my opinion is overborne, my assertions are controverted, and, as insolence always propagates itself, the servants overlook me, in imitation of their master; if I call modestly, I am not heard; if loudly, my usurpation of authority is checked by a general frown. I am often obliged to look uninvited upon delicacies, and sometimes desired to rise upon very slight pretences.

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The incivilities to which I am exposed would give me less pain, were they not aggravated by the tears of my sister, whom the young ladies are hourly tormenting with every art of feminine persecution. As it is said of the supreme magistrate of Venice, that he is a prince in one place, and a slave in another, my sister is a servant to her cousins in their apartments, and a companion only at the table. Her wit and beauty draw so much regard away from them, that they never suffer her to appear with them in any place where they solicit notice, or expect admiration; and when they are visited by neighbouring ladies, and pass their hours in domestick amusements, she is sometimes called to fill a vacancy, insulted with contemptuous freedoms, and dismissed to her needle, when her place is supplied. The heir has of late, by the instigation of his sisters, begun to harass her with clownish jocularity; he seems inclined to make his first rude essays of waggery upon her; and by the connivance, if not encouragement, of his father, treats her with such licentious brutality, as I cannot bear, though I cannot punish it.

I beg to be informed, Mr. Rambler, how much we can be supposed to owe to beneficence, exerted on terms like these? to beneficence which pollutes its gifts with contumely, and may be truly said to pander to pride? I would willingly be told, whether insolence does not reward its own liberalities, and whether he that exacts servility can, with justice, at the same time, expect affection?

I am, sir, &c.

HYPERDULUS.

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N°. 150. SATURDAY, AUGUST 24, 1751.

——*O munera nondum*
Intellecta Deûm! LUCAN.

——Thou chiefest good!
Bestow'd by heav'n, but seldom understood. ROWE.

As daily experience makes it evident that misfortunes are unavoidably incident to human life, that calamity will neither be repelled by fortitude, nor escaped by flight; neither awed by greatness, nor eluded by obscurity; philosophers have endeavoured to reconcile us to that condition which they cannot teach us to mend, by persuading us that most of our evils are made afflictive only by ignorance or perverseness, and that nature has annexed to every vicissitude of external circumstances some advantage sufficient to overbalance all its inconveniencies.

This attempt may, perhaps, be justly suspected of resemblance to the practice of physicians, who, when they cannot mitigate pain, destroy sensibility, and endeavour to conceal, by opiates, the inefficacy of their other medicines. The panegyrists of calamity have more frequently gained applause to their wit, than acquiescence to their arguments; nor has it appeared that the most musical oratory, or subtile ratiocination, has been able long to overpower the anguish of oppression, the tediousness of languor, or the longings of want.

Yet, it may be generally remarked, that, where much has been attempted, something has been performed; though the discoveries or acquisitions of man are not always adequate to the expectations of his pride, they are at least sufficient to animate his industry. The antidotes with which philosophy has medicated the cup of life, though they cannot give it salubrity and sweetness, have at least allayed its bitterness, and contempered its malignity; the balm which she drops upon the wounds of the mind abates their pain, though it cannot heal them.

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By suffering willingly what we cannot avoid, we secure ourselves from vain and immoderate disquiet; we preserve for better purposes that strength which would be unprofitably wasted in wild efforts of desperation, and maintain that circumspection which may enable us to seize every support, and improve every alleviation. This calmness will be more easily obtained, as the attention is more powerfully withdrawn from the contemplation of unmingled, unabated evil, and diverted to those accidental benefits which prudence may confer on every state.

Seneca has attempted not only to pacify us in misfortune, but almost to allure us to it, by representing it as necessary to the pleasures of the mind. *He that never was acquainted with adversity*, says he, *has seen the world but on one side, and is ignorant of half the scenes of nature.* He invites his pupil to calamity, as the Syrens allured the passenger to their coasts, by promising that he shall return πλείονα εἰδώς, with increase of knowledge, with enlarged views, and multiplied ideas.

Curiosity is, in great and generous minds, the first passion and the last; and perhaps always predominates in proportion to the strength of the contemplative faculties. He who easily comprehends all that is before him, and soon exhausts any single subject, is always eager for new inquiries; and in proportion as the intellectual eye takes in a wider prospect, it must be gratified with variety by more rapid flights, and bolder excursions; nor perhaps can there be proposed to those who have been accustomed to the pleasures of thought, a more powerful incitement to any undertaking, than the hope of filling their fancy with new images, of clearing their doubts, and enlightening their reason.

When Jason, in Valerius Flaccus, would incline the young prince Acastus to accompany him in the first essay of navigation, he disperses his apprehensions of danger by representations of the new tracts of earth and heaven, which the expedition would spread before their eyes; and tells him with what grief he will hear, at their return, of the

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countries which they shall have seen, and the toils which they have surmounted:

O quantum terræ, quantum cognoscere cœli,
Permissum est! pelagus quantos aperimus in usus!
Nunc forsan grave reris opus: sed læta recurret
Cum ratis, et caram cum jam mihi reddet Iolcon;
Quis pudor heu nostros tibi tunc audire labores!
Quam referam visus tua per suspiria gentes! ARG. Lib. i. 168.

Led by our stars, what tracts immense we trace!
From seas remote, what funds of science raise!
A pain to thought! but when the heroic band
Returns applauded to their native land,
A life domestick you will then deplore,
And sigh while I describe the various shore. EDW. CAVE.

Acastus was soon prevailed upon by his curiosity to set rocks and hardships at defiance, and commit his life to the winds; and the same motives have in all ages had the same effect upon those whom the desire of fame or wisdom has distinguished from the lower orders of mankind.

If, therefore, it can be proved that distress is necessary to the attainment of knowledge, and that a happy situation hides from us so large a part of the field of meditation, the envy of many who repine at the sight of affluence and splendour will be much diminished; for such is the delight of mental superiority, that none on whom nature or study has conferred it, would purchase the gifts of fortune by its loss.

It is certain, that however the rhetorick of Seneca may have dressed adversity with extrinsick ornaments, he has justly represented it as affording some opportunities of observation, which cannot be found in continual success; he has truly asserted, that to escape misfortune is to want instruction, and that to live at ease is to live in ignorance.

As no man can enjoy happiness without thinking that he enjoys it, the experience of calamity is necessary to a just sense of better fortune; for the good of our present state is merely comparative, and the evil which every man feels will be sufficient to disturb and harass him, if he does not know how much he escapes. The lustre of diamonds is

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invigorated by the interposition of darker bodies; the lights of a picture are created by the shades. The highest pleasure which nature has indulged to sensitive perception, is that of rest after fatigue; yet, that state which labour heightens into delight, is of itself only ease, and is incapable of satisfying the mind without the superaddition of diversified amusements.

Prosperity, as is truly asserted by Seneca, very much obstructs the knowledge of ourselves. No man can form a just estimate of his own powers by unactive speculation. That fortitude which has encountered no dangers, that prudence which has surmounted no difficulties, that integrity which has been attacked by no temptations, can at best be considered but as gold not yet brought to the test, of which, therefore, the true value cannot be assigned. *He that traverses the lists without an adversary, may receive,* says the philosopher, *the reward of victory, but he has no pretensions to the honour.* If it be the highest happiness of man to contemplate himself with satisfaction, and to receive the gratulations of his own conscience; he whose courage has made way amidst the turbulence of opposition, and whose vigour has broken through the snares of distress, has many advantages over those that have slept in the shades of indolence, and whose retrospect of time can entertain them with nothing but day rising upon day, and year gliding after year.

Equally necessary is some variety of fortune to a nearer inspection of the manners, principles, and affections, of mankind. Princes, when they would know the opinions or grievances of their subjects, find it necessary to steal away from guards and attendants, and mingle on equal terms among the people. To him who is known to have the power of doing good or harm, nothing is shown in its natural form. The behaviour of all that approach him is regulated by his humour, their narratives are adapted to his inclination, and their reasonings determined by his opinions; whatever can alarm suspicion, or excite resentment, is carefully suppressed, and nothing appears but uniform-

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ity of sentiments, and ardour of affection. It may be observed, that the unvaried complaisance which ladies have the right of exacting, keeps them generally unskilled in human nature; prosperity will always enjoy the female prerogatives, and therefore must be always in danger of female ignorance. Truth is scarcely to be heard but by those from whom it can serve no interest to conceal it.

N°. 151. TUESDAY, AUGUST 27, 1751.

——Ἀμφὶ δ' ἀνθρώ-
πων φρεσὶν ἀμπλακίαι
Ἀναρίθματοι κρέμανται.
Τοῦτο δ' ἀμάχανον εὑρεῖν,
Ὅ τι νῦν, καὶ ἐν τελευ-
τᾷ φέρτατον ἀνδρὶ τυχεῖν. PIND. Olymp. vii. 43.

But wrapt in error is the human mind,
And human bliss is ever insecure:
Know we what fortune yet remains behind?
Know we how long the present shall endure? WEST.

THE writers of medicine and physiology have traced, with great appearance of accuracy, the effects of time upon the human body, by marking the various periods of the constitution, and the several stages by which animal life makes its progress from infancy to decrepitude. Though their observations have not enabled them to discover how manhood may be accelerated, or old age retarded, yet surely, if they be considered only as the amusements of curiosity, they are of equal importance with conjectures on things more remote, with catalogues of the fixed stars, and calculations of the bulk of planets.

It had been a task worthy of the moral philosophers, to have considered with equal care the climactericks of the mind; to have pointed out the time at which every passion begins and ceases to predominate, and noted the regular variations of desire, and the succession of one appetite to another.

The periods of mental change are not to be stated with

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equal certainty; our bodies grow up under the care of nature, and depend so little on our own management, that something more than negligence is necessary to discompose their structure, or impede their vigour. But our minds are committed, in a great measure, first to the direction of others, and afterwards of ourselves. It would be difficult to protract the weakness of infancy beyond the usual time, but the mind may be very easily hindered from its share of improvement, and the bulk and strength of manhood must, without the assistance of education and instruction, be informed only with the understanding of a child.

Yet, amidst all the disorder and inequality which variety of discipline, example, conversation, and employment, produce in the intellectual advances of different men, there is still discovered, by a vigilant spectator, such a general and remote similitude, as may be expected in the same common nature, affected by external circumstances indefinitely varied. We all enter the world in equal ignorance, gaze round about us on the same objects, and have our first pains and pleasures, our first hopes and fears, our first aversions and desires, from the same causes; and though, as we proceed further, life opens wider prospects to our view, and accidental impulses determine us to different paths, yet as every mind, however vigorous or abstracted, is necessitated, in its present state of union, to receive its informations, and execute its purposes, by the intervention of the body, the uniformity of our corporeal nature communicates itself to our intellectual operations; and those whose abilities or knowledge incline them most to deviate from the general round of life, are recalled from eccentricity by the laws of their existence.

If we consider the excercises of the mind, it will be found that in each part of life some particular faculty is more eminently employed. When the treasures of knowledge are first opened before us, while novelty blooms alike on either hand, and every thing, equally unknown and unexamined, seems of equal value, the power of the soul

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is principally exerted in a vivacious and desultory curiosity. She applies by turns to every object, enjoys it for a short time, and flies with equal ardour to another. She delights to catch up loose and unconnected ideas, but starts away from systems and complications, which would obstruct the rapidity of her transitions, and detain her long in the same pursuit.

When a number of distinct images are collected by these erratick and hasty surveys, the fancy is busied in arranging them; and combines them into pleasing pictures, with more resemblance to the realities of life, as experience advances, and new observations rectify the former. While the judgment is yet uninformed, and unable to compare the draughts of fiction with their originals, we are delighted with improbable adventures, impracticable virtues, and inimitable characters: but, in proportion as we have more opportunities of acquainting ourselves with living nature, we are sooner disgusted with copies in which there appears no resemblance. We first discard absurdity and impossibility, then exact greater and greater degrees of probability, but at last become cold and insensible to the charms of falsehood, however specious, and, from the imitations of truth, which are never perfect, transfer our affection to truth itself.

Now commences the reign of judgment or reason; we begin to find little pleasure but in comparing arguments, stating propositions, disentangling perplexities, clearing ambiguities, and deducing consequences. The painted vales of imagination are deserted, and our intellectual activity is exercised in winding through the labyrinths of fallacy, and toiling with firm and cautious steps up the narrow tracks of demonstration. Whatever may lull vigilance, or mislead attention, is contemptuously rejected, and every disguise in which errour may be concealed, is carefully observed, till, by degrees, a certain number of incontestable or unsuspected propositions are established, and at last concatenated into arguments, or compacted into systems.

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At length weariness succeeds to labour, and the mind lies at ease in the contemplation of her own attainments, without any desire of new conquests or excursions. This is the age of recollection and narrative; the opinions are settled, and the avenues of apprehension shut against any new intelligence; the days that are to follow must pass in the inculcation of precepts already collected, and assertion of tenets already received; nothing is henceforward so odious as opposition, so insolent as doubt, or so dangerous as novelty.

In like manner the passions usurp the separate command of the successive periods of life. To the happiness of our first years nothing more seems necessary than freedom from restraint: every man may remember that if he was left to himself, and indulged in the disposal of his own time, he was once content without the superaddition of any actual pleasure. The new world is itself a banquet; and, till we have exhausted the freshness of life, we have always about us sufficient gratifications: the sunshine quickens us to play, and the shade invites us to sleep.

But we soon become unsatisfied with negative felicity, and are solicited by our senses and appetites to more powerful delights, as the taste of him who has satisfied his hunger must be excited by artificial stimulations. The simplicity of natural amusement is now past, and art and contrivance must improve our pleasures; but in time, art, like nature, is exhausted, and the senses can no longer supply the cravings of the intellect.

The attention is then transferred from pleasure to interest, in which pleasure is perhaps included, though diffused to a wider extent, and protracted through new gradations. Nothing now dances before the eyes but wealth and power, nor rings in the ear, but the voice of fame; wealth, to which, however variously denominated, every man at some time or other aspires; power, which all wish to obtain within their circle of action; and fame, which no man, however high or mean, however wise or ignorant, was yet able to despise. Now prudence and foresight

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exert their influence: no hour is devoted wholly to any present enjoyment, no act or purpose terminates in itself, but every motion is referred to some distant end; the accomplishment of one design begins another, and the ultimate wish is always pushed off to its former distance.

At length fame is observed to be uncertain, and power to be dangerous; the man whose vigour and alacrity begin to forsake him, by degrees contracts his designs, remits his former multiplicity of pursuits, and extends no longer his regard to any other honour than the reputation of wealth, or any other influence than his power. Avarice is generally the last passion of those lives of which the first part has been squandered in pleasure, and the second devoted to ambition. He that sinks under the fatigue of getting wealth, lulls his age with the milder business of saving it.

I have in this view of life considered man as actuated only by natural desires, and yielding to their own inclinations, without regard to superior principles, by which the force of external agents may be counteracted, and the temporary prevalence of passions restrained. Nature will, indeed, always operate; human desires will be always ranging; but these motions, though very powerful, are not resistless; nature may be regulated, and desires governed; and, to contend with the predominance of successive passions, to be endangered first by one affection, and then by another, is the condition upon which we are to pass our time, the time of our preparation for that state which shall put an end to experiment, to disappointment, and to change.

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N°. 152. SATURDAY, AUGUST 31, 1751.

———————*Tristia mœstum*
Vultum verba decent, iratum plena minarum. Hor. De Ar. Poet. 105.
Disastrous words can best disaster show;
In angry phrase the angry passions glow. Elphinston.

"It was the wisdom," says Seneca, "of ancient times, to consider what is most useful as most illustrious." If this rule be applied to works of genius, scarcely any species of composition deserves more to be cultivated than the epistolary style, since none is of more various or frequent use through the whole subordination of human life.

It has yet happened that, among the numerous writers which our nation has produced, equal, perhaps, always in force and genius, and of late in elegance and accuracy, to those of any other country, very few have endeavoured to distinguish themselves by the publication of letters, except such as were written in the discharge of publick trusts, and during the transaction of great affairs; which, though they afford precedents to the minister, and memorials to the historian, are of no use as examples of the familiar style, or models of private correspondence.

If it be inquired by foreigners, how this deficiency has happened in the literature of a country, where all indulge themselves, with so little danger, in speaking and writing, may we not, without either bigotry or arrogance, inform them, that it must be imputed to our contempt of trifles, and our due sense of the dignity of the publick? We do not think it reasonable to fill the world with volumes from which nothing can be learned, nor expect that the employments of the busy, or the amusements of the gay, should give way to narratives of our private affairs, complaints of absence, expressions of fondness, or declarations of fidelity.

A slight perusal of the innumerable letters by which the wits of France have signalized their names, will prove that other nations need not be discouraged from the like attempts by the consciousness of inability; for surely it is

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not very difficult to aggravate trifling misfortunes, to magnify familiar incidents, repeat adulatory professions, accumulate servile hyperboles, and produce all that can be found in the despicable remains of Voiture and Scarron.

Yet, as much of life must be passed in affairs considerable only by their frequent occurrence, and much of the pleasure which our condition allows, must be produced by giving elegance to trifles, it is necessary to learn how to become little without becoming mean, to maintain the necessary intercourse of civility, and fill up the vacuities of actions by agreeable appearances. It had therefore been of advantage, if such of our writers as have excelled in the art of decorating insignificance, had supplied us with a few sallies of innocent gaiety, effusions of honest tenderness, or exclamations of unimportant hurry.

Precept has generally been posterior to performance. The art of composing works of genius has never been taught but by the example of those who performed it by natural vigour of imagination, and rectitude of judgment. As we have few letters, we have likewise few criticisms upon the epistolary style. The observations with which Walsh has introduced his pages of inanity, are such as give him little claim to the rank assigned him by Dryden among the criticks. *Letters*, says he, *are intended as resemblances of conversation, and the chief excellencies of conversation are good humour and good breeding.* This remark, equally valuable for its novelty and propriety, he dilates and enforces with an appearance of complete acquiescence in his own discovery.

No man was ever in doubt about the moral qualities of a letter. It has been always known that he who endeavours to please must appear pleased, and he who would not provoke rudeness must not practise it. But the question among those who establish rules for an epistolary performance is, how gaiety or civility may be properly expressed; as among the criticks in history it is not contested whether truth ought to be preserved, but by what mode of diction it is best adorned.

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As letters are written on all subjects, in all states of mind, they cannot be properly reduced to settled rules, or described by any single characteristick: and we may safely disentangle our minds from critical embarrassments, by determining that a letter has no peculiarity but its form, and that nothing is to be refused admission, which would be proper in any other method of treating the same subject. The qualities of the epistolary style most frequently required, are ease and simplicity, an even flow of unlaboured diction, and an artless arrangement of obvious sentiments. But these directions are no sooner applied to use, than their scantiness and imperfection become evident. Letters are written to the great and to the mean, to the learned and the ignorant, at rest and in distress, in sport and in passion. Nothing can be more improper than ease and laxity of expression, when the importance of the subject impresses solicitude, or the dignity of the person exacts reverence.

That letters should be written with strict conformity to nature is true, because nothing but conformity to nature can make any composition beautiful or just. But it is natural to depart from familiarity of language upon occasions not familiar. Whatever elevates the sentiments will consequently raise the expression; whatever fills us with hope or terrour, will produce some perturbation of images and some figurative distortions of phrase. Wherever we are studious to please, we are afraid of trusting our first thoughts, and endeavour to recommend our opinion by studied ornaments, accuracy of method, and elegance of style.

If the personages of the comick scene be allowed by Horace to raise their language in the transports of anger to the turgid vehemence of tragedy, the epistolary writer may likewise without censure comply with the varieties of his matter. If great events are to be related, he may with all the solemnity of an historian deduce them from their causes, connect them with their concomitants, and trace them to their consequences. If a disputed position is to be established, or a remote principle to be investigated, he

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may detail his reasonings with all the nicety of syllogistick method. If a menace is to be averted, or a benefit implored, he may, without any violation of the edicts of criticism, call every power of rhetorick to his assistance, and try every inlet at which love or pity enters the heart.

Letters that have no other end than the entertainment of the correspondents are more properly regulated by critical precepts, because the matter and style are equally arbitrary, and rules are more necessary, as there is a larger power of choice. In letters of this kind, some conceive art graceful, and others think negligence amiable; some model them by the sonnet, and will allow them no means of delighting but the soft lapse of calm mellifluence; others adjust them by the epigram, and expect pointed sentences and forcible periods. The one party considers exemption from faults as the height of excellence, the other looks upon neglect of excellence as the most disgusting fault; one avoids censure, the other aspires to praise; one is always in danger of insipidity, the other continually on the brink of affectation.

When the subject has no intrinsick dignity, it must necessarily owe its attractions to artificial embellishments, and may catch at all advantages which the art of writing can supply. He that, like Pliny, sends his friend a portion for his daughter, will, without Pliny's eloquence or address, find means of exciting gratitude, and securing acceptance; but he that has no present to make but a garland, a riband, or some petty curiosity, must endeavour to recommend it by his manner of giving it.

The purpose for which letters are written when no intelligence is communicated, or business transacted, is to preserve in the minds of the absent either love or esteem: to excite love we must impart pleasure, and to raise esteem we must discover abilities. Pleasure will generally be given, as abilities are displayed by scenes of imagery, points of conceit, unexpected sallies, and artful compliments. Trifles always require exuberance of ornament; the building which has no strength can be valued only for

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the grace of its decorations. The pebble must be polished with care, which hopes to be valued as a diamond; and words ought surely to be laboured, when they are intended to stand for things.

N°. 153. TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 3, 1751.

Turba Remi? Sequitur Fortunam, ut semper, et odit
Damnatos. Juv. Sat. x. 73.

The fickle crowd with fortune comes and goes;
Wealth still finds followers, and misfortune foes.

TO THE RAMBLER.

SIR,

THERE are occasions on which all apology is rudeness. He that has an unwelcome message to deliver, may give some proof of tenderness and delicacy, by a ceremonial introduction and gradual discovery, because the mind, upon which the weight of sorrow is to fall, gains time for the collection of its powers; but nothing is more absurd than to delay the communication of pleasure, to torment curiosity by impatience, and to delude hope by anticipation.

I shall therefore forbear the arts by which correspondents generally secure admission, for I have too long remarked the power of vanity, to doubt that I shall be read by you with a disposition to approve, when I declare that my narrative has no other tendency than to illustrate and corroborate your own observations.

I was the second son of a gentleman, whose patrimony had been wasted by a long succession of squanderers, till he was unable to support any of his children, except his heir, in the hereditary dignity of idleness. Being therefore obliged to employ that part of life in study which my progenitors had devoted to the hawk and hound, I was in

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my eighteenth year despatched to the university, without any rural honours. I had never killed a single woodcock, nor partaken one triumph over a conquered fox.

At the university I continued to enlarge my acquisitions with little envy of the noisy happiness which my elder brother had the fortune to enjoy; and, having obtained my degree, retired to consider at leisure to what profession I should confine that application which had hitherto been dissipated in general knowledge. To deliberate upon a choice which custom and honour forbid to be retracted, is certainly reasonable; yet to let loose the attention equally to the advantages and inconveniencies of every employment is not without danger; new motives are every moment operating on every side; and mechanicks have long ago discovered, that contrariety of equal attractions is equivalent to rest.

While I was thus trifling in uncertainty, an old adventurer, who had been once the intimate friend of my father, arrived from the Indies with a large fortune; which he had so much harassed himself in obtaining, that sickness and infirmity left him no other desire than to die in his native country. His wealth easily procured him an invitation to pass his life with us; and, being incapable of any amusement but conversation, he necessarily became familiarized to me, whom he found studious and domestick. Pleased with an opportunity of imparting my knowledge, and eager of any intelligence that might increase it, I delighted his curiosity with historical narratives and explications of nature, and gratified his vanity by inquiries after the products of distant countries, and the customs of their inhabitants.

My brother saw how much I advanced in the favour of our guest, who, being without heirs, was naturally expected to enrich the family of his friend, but never attempted to alienate me, nor to ingratiate himself. He was, indeed, little qualified to solicit the affection of a traveller, for the remissness of his education had left him without any rule of action but his present humour. He often forsook the

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old gentleman in the midst of an adventure, because the horn sounded in the court-yard, and would have lost an opportunity, not only of knowing the history, but sharing the wealth of the mogul, for the trial of a new pointer, or the sight of a horserace.

It was, therefore, not long before our new friend declared his intention of bequeathing to me the profits of his commerce, as the only man in the family by whom he could expect them to be rationally enjoyed. This distinction drew upon me the envy not only of my brother but my father.

As no man is willing to believe that he suffers by his own fault, they imputed the preference which I had obtained, to adulatory compliances, or malignant calumnies. To no purpose did I call upon my patron to attest my innocence, for who will believe what he wishes to be false? In the heat of disappointment they forced their inmate by repeated insults to depart from the house, and I was soon, by the same treatment, obliged to follow him.

He chose his residence in the confines of London, where rest, tranquillity, and medicine, restored him to part of the health which he had lost. I pleased myself with perceiving that I was not likely to obtain the immediate possession of wealth which no labour of mine had contributed to acquire; and that he, who had thus distinguished me, might hope to end his life without a total frustration of those blessings, which, whatever be their real value, he had sought with so much diligence, and purchased with so many vicissitudes of danger and fatigue.

He, indeed, left me no reason to repine at his recovery, for he was willing to accustom me early to the use of money, and set apart for my expenses such a revenue as I had scarcely dared to image. I can yet congratulate myself that fortune has seen her golden cup once tasted without inebriation. Neither my modesty nor prudence was overwhelmed by affluence; my elevation was without insolence, and my expense without profusion. Employing the influence which money always confers, to the improve-

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ment of my understanding, I mingled in parties of gaiety, and in conferences of learning, appeared in every place where instruction was to be found, and imagined that, by ranging through all the diversities of life, I had acquainted myself fully with human nature, and learned all that was to be known of the ways of men.

It happened, however, that I soon discovered how much was wanted to the completion of my knowledge, and found that, according to Seneca's remark, I had hitherto seen the world but on one side. My patron's confidence in his increase of strength tempted him to carelessness and irregularity; he caught a fever by riding in the rain, of which he died delirious on the third day. I buried him without any of the heir's affected grief or secret exultation; then preparing to take a legal possession of his fortune, I opened his closet, where I found a will, made at his first arrival, by which my father was appointed the chief inheritor, and nothing was left me but a legacy sufficient to support me in the prosecution of my studies.

I had not yet found such charms in prosperity as to continue it by any acts of forgery or injustice, and made haste to inform my father of the riches which had been given him, not by the preference of kindness, but by the delays of indolence and cowardice of age. The hungry family flew like vultures on their prey, and soon made my disappointment publick, by the tumult of their claims, and the splendour of their sorrow.

It was now my part to consider how I should repair the disappointment. I could not but triumph in my long list of friends, which comprised almost every name that power or knowledge entitled to eminence; and, in the prospect of the innumerable roads to honour and preferment, which I had laid open to myself by the wise use of temporary riches, I believed nothing necessary but that I should continue that acquaintance to which I had been so readily admitted, and which had hitherto been cultivated on both sides with equal ardour.

Full of these expectations, I one morning ordered a

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chair, with an intention to make my usual circle of morning visits. Where I first stopped I saw two footmen lolling at the door, who told me without any change of posture, or collection of countenance, that their master was at home, and suffered me to open the inner door without assistance. I found my friend standing, and, as I was tattling with my former freedom, was formally entreated to sit down; but did not stay to be favoured with any further condescensions.

My next experiment was made at the levee of a statesman, who received me with an embrace of tenderness, that he might with more decency publish my change of fortune to the sycophants about him. After he had enjoyed the triumph of condolence, he turned to a wealthy stockjobber, and left me exposed to the scorn of those who had lately courted my notice, and solicited my interest.

I was then set down at the door of another, who, upon my entrance, advised me, with great solemnity, to think of some settled provision for life. I left him, and hurried away to an old friend, who professed himself unsusceptible of any impressions from prosperity or misfortune, and begged that he might see me when he was more at leisure.

Of sixty-seven doors, at which I knocked in the first week after my appearance in a mourning dress, I was denied admission at forty-six; was suffered at fourteen to wait in the outer room till business was despatched; at four, was entertained with a few questions about the weather; at one, heard the footman rated for bringing my name; and at two was informed, in the flow of casual conversation, how much a man of rank degrades himself by mean company.

My curiosity now led me to try what reception I should find among the ladies; but I found that my patron had carried all my powers of pleasing to the grave. I had formerly been celebrated as a wit, and not perceiving any languor in my imagination, I essayed to revive that gaiety which had hitherto broken out involuntarily before my sentences were finished. My remarks were now heard

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with a steady countenance, and if a girl happened to give way to habitual merriment, her forwardness was repressed with a frown by her mother or her aunt.

Wherever I come I scatter infirmity and disease; every lady whom I meet in the Mall is too weary to walk; all whom I entreat to sing are troubled with colds: if I propose cards, they are afflicted with the headach; if I invite them to the gardens, they cannot bear a crowd.

All this might be endured; but there is a class of mortals who think my understanding impaired with my fortune, exalt themselves to the dignity of advice, and, whenever we happen to meet, presume to prescribe my conduct, regulate my economy, and direct my pursuits. Another race, equally impertinent and equally despicable, are every moment recommending to me an attention to my interest, and think themselves entitled, by their superiour prudence, to reproach me, if I speak or move without regard to profit.

Such, Mr. Rambler, is the power of wealth, that it commands the ear of greatness and the eye of beauty, gives spirit to the dull, and authority to the timorous, and leaves him from whom it departs, without virtue and without understanding, the sport of caprice, the scoff of insolence, the slave of meanness, and the pupil of ignorance.

I am, &c.

N°. 154. SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 7, 1751.

——*Tibi res antiquæ laudis et artis*
Ingredior, sanctos ausus recludere fontes. VIR. Geo. ii. 174.

For thee my tuneful accents will I raise,
And treat of arts disclos'd in ancient days;
Once more unlock for thee the sacred spring. DRYDEN.

THE direction of Aristotle to those that study politicks, is, first to examine and understand what has been written by the ancients upon government; then to cast their eyes round upon the world, and consider by what causes the

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prosperity of communities is visibly influenced, and why some are worse, and others better administered.

The same method must be pursued by him who hopes to become eminent in any other part of knowledge. The first task is to search books, the next to contemplate nature. He must first possess himself of the intellectual treasures which the diligence of former ages has accumulated, and then endeavour to increase them by his own collections.

The mental disease of the present generation, is impatience of study, contempt of the great masters of ancient wisdom, and a disposition to rely wholly upon unassisted genius and natural sagacity. The wits of these happy days have discovered a way to fame, which the dull caution of our laborious ancestors durst never attempt; they cut the knots of sophistry which it was formerly the business of years to untie, solve difficulties by sudden irradiations of intelligence, and comprehend long processes of argument by immediate intuition.

Men who have flattered themselves into this opinion of their own abilities, look down on all who waste their lives over books, as a race of inferiour beings, condemned by nature to perpetual pupilage, and fruitlessly endeavouring to remedy their barrenness by incessant cultivation, or succour their feebleness by subsidiary strength. They presume that none would be more industrious than they, if they were not more sensible of deficiencies; and readily conclude, that he who places no confidence in his own powers, owes his modesty only to his weakness.

It is, however, certain, that no estimate is more in danger of erroneous calculations than those by which a man computes the force of his own genius. It generally happens at our entrance into the world, that, by the natural attraction of similitude, we associate with men like ourselves, young, sprightly, and ignorant, and rate our accomplishments by comparison with theirs; when we have once obtained an acknowledged superiority over our acquaintances, imagination and desire easily extend it over the rest of

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mankind, and if no accident forces us into new emulations, we grow old, and die in admiration of ourselves.

Vanity, thus confirmed in her dominion, readily listens to the voice of idleness, and sooths the slumber of life with continual dreams of excellence and greatness. A man, elated by confidence in his natural vigour of fancy and sagacity of conjecture, soon concludes that he already possesses whatever toil and inquiry can confer. He then listens with eagerness to the wild objections which folly has raised against the common means of improvement; talks of the dark chaos of indigested knowledge; describes the mischievous effects of heterogeneous sciences fermenting in the mind; relates the blunders of lettered ignorance; expatiates on the heroick merit of those who deviate from prescription, or shake off authority; and gives vent to the inflations of his heart by declaring that he owes nothing to pedants and universities.

All these pretensions, however confident, are very often vain. The laurels which superficial acuteness gains in triumphs over ignorance unsupported by vivacity, are observed by Locke to be lost, whenever real learning and rational diligence appear against her; the sallies of gaiety are soon repressed by calm confidence; and the artifices of subtilty are readily detected by those, who, having carefully studied the question, are not easily confounded or surprised.

But, though the contemner of books had neither been deceived by others nor himself, and was really born with a genius surpassing the ordinary abilities of mankind; yet surely such gifts of providence may be more properly urged as incitements to labour, than encouragements to negligence. He that neglects the culture of ground naturally fertile, is more shamefully culpable, than he whose field would scarcely recompense his husbandry.

Cicero remarks, that not to know what has been transacted in former times, is to continue always a child. If no use is made of the labours of past ages, the world must remain always in the infancy of knowledge. The

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discoveries of every man must terminate in his own advantage, and the studies of every age be employed on questions which the past generation had discussed and determined. We may with as little reproach borrow science as manufactures from our ancestors; and it is as rational to live in caves till our own hands have erected a palace, as to reject all knowledge of architecture which our understandings will not supply.

To the strongest and quickest mind it is far easier to learn than to invent. The principles of arithmetick and geometry may be comprehended by a close attention in a few days; yet who can flatter himself that the study of a long life would have enabled him to discover them, when he sees them yet unknown to so many nations, whom he cannot suppose less liberally endowed with natural reason, than the Grecians or Egyptians?

Every science was thus far advanced towards perfection, by the emulous diligence of contemporary students, and the gradual discoveries of one age improving on another. Sometimes unexpected flashes of instruction were struck out by the fortuitous collision of happy incidents, or an involuntary concurrence of ideas, in which the philosopher to whom they happened had no other merit than that of knowing their value, and transmitting, unclouded, to posterity, that light which had been kindled by causes out of his power. The happiness of these casual illuminations no man can promise to himself, because no endeavours can procure them; and, therefore, whatever be our abilities or application, we must submit to learn from others what, perhaps, would have lain hid for ever from human penetration, had not some remote inquiry brought it to view; as treasures are thrown up by the ploughman and the digger in the rude exercise of their common occupations.

The man whose genius qualifies him for great undertakings, must at least be content to learn from books the present state of human knowledge; that he may not ascribe to himself the invention of arts generally known; weary his attention with experiments of which the event

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has been long registered; and waste, in attempts which have already succeeded or miscarried, that time which might have been spent with usefulness and honour upon new undertakings.

But, though the study of books is necessary, it is not sufficient to constitute literary eminence. He that wishes to be counted among the benefactors of posterity, must add by his own toil to the acquisitions of his ancestors, and secure his memory from neglect by some valuable improvement. This can only be effected by looking out upon the wastes of the intellectual world, and extending the power of learning over regions yet undisciplined and barbarous; or by surveying more exactly our ancient dominions, and driving ignorance from the fortresses and retreats where she skulks undetected and undisturbed. Every science has its difficulties, which yet call for solution before we attempt new systems of knowledge; as every country has its forests and marshes, which it would be wise to cultivate and drain, before distant colonies are projected as a necessary discharge of the exuberance of inhabitants.

No man ever yet became great by imitation. Whatever hopes for the veneration of mankind must have invention in the design or the execution; either the effect must itself be new, or the means by which it is produced. Either truths hitherto unknown must be discovered, or those which are already known enforced by stronger evidence, facilitated by clearer method, or elucidated by brighter illustrations.

Fame cannot spread wide or endure long that is not rooted in nature, and matured by art. That which hopes to resist the blast of malignity, and stand firm against the attacks of time, must contain in itself some original principle of growth. The reputation which arises from the detail or transposition of borrowed sentiments, may spread for awhile, like ivy on the rind of antiquity, but will be torn away by accident or contempt, and suffered to rot unheeded on the ground.

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N°. 155. TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 10, 1751.

——*Steriles transmisimus annos,*
Hæc ævi mihi prima dies, hæc limina vitæ. STAT. i. 362.

——Our barren years are past;
Be this of life the first, of sloth the last. ELPHINSTON.

No weakness of the human mind has more frequently incurred animadversion, than the negligence with which men overlook their own faults, however flagrant, and the easiness with which they pardon them, however frequently repeated.

It seems generally believed, that as the eye cannot see itself, the mind has no faculties by which it can contemplate its own state, and that therefore we have not means of becoming acquainted with our real characters; an opinion which, like innumerable other postulates, an inquirer finds himself inclined to admit upon very little evidence, because it affords a ready solution of many difficulties. It will explain why the greatest abilities frequently fail to promote the happiness of those who possess them; why those who can distinguish with the utmost nicety the boundaries of vice and virtue, suffer them to be confounded in their own conduct; why the active and vigilant resign their affairs implicitly to the management of others; and why the cautious and fearful make hourly approaches towards ruin, without one sigh of solicitude or struggle for escape.

When a position teems thus with commodious consequences, who can without regret confess it to be false? Yet it is certain that declaimers have indulged a disposition to describe the dominion of the passions as extended beyond the limits that nature assigned. Self-love is often rather arrogant than blind; it does not hide our faults from ourselves, but persuades us that they escape the notice of others, and disposes us to resent censures lest we should confess them to be just. We are secretly conscious

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of defects and vices, which we hope to conceal from the publick eye, and please ourselves with innumerable impostures, by which, in reality, nobody is deceived.

In proof of the dimness of our internal sight, or the general inability of man to determine rightly concerning his own character, it is common to urge the success of the most absurd and incredible flattery, and the resentment always raised by advice, however soft, benevolent, and reasonable. But flattery, if its operation be nearly examined, will be found to owe its acceptance, not to our ignorance, but knowledge of our failures, and to delight us rather as it consoles our wants than displays our possessions. He that shall solicit the favour of his patron by praising him for qualities which he can find in himself, will be defeated by the more daring panegyrist who enriches him with adscititious excellence. Just praise is only a debt, but flattery is a present. The acknowledgment of those virtues on which conscience congratulates us, is a tribute that we can at any time exact with confidence; but the celebration of those which we only feign, or desire without any vigorous endeavours to attain them, is received as a confession of sovereignty over regions never conquered, as a favourable decision of disputable claims, and is more welcome as it is more gratuitous.

Advice is offensive, not because it lays us open to unexpected regret, or convicts us of any fault which had escaped our notice, but because it shows us that we are known to others as well as to ourselves; and the officious monitor is persecuted with hatred, not because his accusation is false, but because he assumes that superiority which we are not willing to grant him, and has dared to detect what we desired to conceal.

For this reason advice is commonly ineffectual. If those who follow the call of their desires, without inquiry whither they are going, had deviated ignorantly from the paths of wisdom, and were rushing upon dangers unforeseen, they would readily listen to information that recalls them from their errours, and catch the first alarm by which

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destruction or infamy is denounced. Few that wander in the wrong way mistake it for the right, they only find it more smooth and flowery, and indulge their own choice rather than approve it: therefore few are persuaded to quit it by admonition or reproof, since it impresses no new conviction, nor confers any powers of action or resistance. He that is gravely informed how soon profusion will annihilate his fortune, hears with little advantage what he knew before, and catches at the next occasion of expense, because advice has no force to suppress his vanity. He that is told how certainly intemperance will hurry him to the grave, runs with his usual speed to a new course of luxury, because his reason is not invigorated, nor his appetite weakened.

The mischief of flattery is, not that it persuades any man that he is what he is not, but that it suppresses the influence of honest ambition, by raising an opinion that honour may be gained without the toil of merit; and the benefit of advice arises commonly not from any new light imparted to the mind, but from the discovery which it affords of the publick suffrages. He that could withstand conscience is frighted at infamy, and shame prevails when reason is defeated.

As we all know our own faults, and know them commonly with many aggravations which human perspicacity cannot discover, there is, perhaps, no man, however hardened by impudence or dissipated by levity, sheltered by hypocrisy or blasted by disgrace, who does not intend some time to review his conduct, and to regulate the remainder of his life by the laws of virtue. New temptations, indeed, attack him, new invitations are offered by pleasure and interest, and the hour of reformation is always delayed; every delay gives vice another opportunity of fortifying itself by habit; and the change of manners though sincerely intended and rationally planned, is referred to the time when some craving passion shall be fully gratified, or some powerful allurement cease its importunity.

Thus procrastination is accumulated on procrastination,

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and one impediment succeeds another, till age shatters our resolution, or death intercepts the project of amendment. Such is often the end of salutary purposes, after they have long delighted the imagination, and appeased that disquiet which every mind feels from known misconduct, when the attention is not diverted by business or by pleasure.

Nothing surely can be more unworthy of a reasonable nature, than to continue in a state so opposite to real happiness, as that all the peace of solitude, and felicity of meditation, must arise from resolutions of forsaking it. Yet the world will often afford examples of men, who pass months and years in a continual war with their own convictions, and are daily dragged by habit, or betrayed by passion, into practices which they closed and opened their eyes with purposes to avoid; purposes which, though settled on conviction, the first impulse of momentary desire totally overthrows.

The influence of custom is, indeed, such, that to conquer it will require the utmost efforts of fortitude and virtue; nor can I think any man more worthy of veneration and renown, than those who have burst the shackles of habitual vice. This victory, however, has different degrees of glory as of difficulty; it is more heroick as the objects of guilty gratification are more familiar, and the recurrence of solicitation more frequent. He that, from experience of the folly of ambition, resigns his offices, may set himself free at once from temptation to squander his life in courts, because he cannot regain his former station. He who is enslaved by an amorous passion, may quit his tyrant in disgust, and absence will, without the help of reason, overcome, by degrees, the desire of returning. But those appetites to which every place affords their proper object, and which require no preparatory measures or gradual advances, are more tenaciously adhesive; the wish is so near the enjoyment, that compliance often precedes consideration, and, before the powers of reason can be summoned, the time for employing them is past.

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Indolence is, therefore, one of the vices from which those whom it once infects are seldom reformed. Every other species of luxury operates upon some appetite that is quickly satiated, and requires some concurrence of art or accident which every place will not supply; but the desire of ease acts equally at all hours, and the longer it is indulged is the more increased. To do nothing is in every man's power; we can never want an opportunity of omitting duties. The lapse to indolence is soft and imperceptible, because it is only a mere cessation of activity; but the return to diligence is difficult, because it implies a change from rest to motion, from privation to reality:

———*Facilis descensus Averni:*
Noctes atque dies patet atri janua Ditis:
Sed revocare gradum, superasque evadere ad auras,
Hoc opus, hic labor est.——— VIR. Æn. Lib. vi. 126.

The gates of hell are open night and day;
Smooth the descent, and easy is the way;
But to return, and view the cheerful skies,
In this the task and mighty labour lies. DRYDEN

Of this vice, as of all others, every man who indulges it is conscious: we all know our own state, if we could be induced to consider it, and it might, perhaps, be useful to the conquest of all these ensnarers of the mind, if, at certain stated days, life was reviewed. Many things necessary are omitted, because we vainly imagine that they may be always performed; and what cannot be done without pain will for ever be delayed, if the time of doing it be left unsettled. No corruption is great but by long negligence, which can scarcely prevail in a mind regularly and frequently awakened by periodical remorse. He that thus breaks his life into parts, will find in himself a desire to distinguish every stage of his existence by some improvement, and delight himself with the approach of the day of recollection, as of the time which is to begin a new series of virtue and felicity.

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N°. 156. SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 14, 1751.

Nunquam aliud natura, aliud sapientia dicit. Juv. Sat. xiv. 321.

For wisdom ever echoes nature's voice.

EVERY government, say the politicians, is perpetually degenerating towards corruption, from which it must be rescued at certain periods by the resuscitation of its first principles, and the re-establishment of its original constitution. Every animal body, according to the methodick physicians, is, by the predominance of some exuberant quality, continually declining towards disease and death, which must be obviated by a seasonable reduction of the peccant humour to the just equipoise which health requires.

In the same manner the studies of mankind, all, at least, which, not being subject to rigorous demonstration, admit the influence of fancy and caprice, are perpetually tending to errour and confusion. Of the great principles of truth which the first speculatists discovered, the simplicity is embarrassed by ambitious additions, or the evidence obscured by inaccurate argumentation; and as they descend from one succession of writers to another, like light transmitted from room to room, they lose their strength and splendour, and fade at last in total evanescence.

The systems of learning, therefore, must be sometimes reviewed, complications analyzed into principles, and knowledge disentangled from opinion. It is not always possible, without a close inspection, to separate the genuine shoots of consequential reasoning, which grow out of some radical postulate, from the branches which art has ingrafted on it. The accidental prescriptions of authority, when time has procured them veneration, are often confounded with the laws of nature, and those rules are supposed coeval with reason, of which the first rise cannot be discovered.

Criticism has sometimes permitted fancy to dictate the laws by which fancy ought to be restrained, and fallacy to perplex the principles by which fallacy is to be detected;

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her superintendence of others has betrayed her to negligence of herself; and, like the ancient Scythians, by extending her conquests over distant regions, she has left her throne vacant to her slaves.

Among the laws of which the desire of extending authority, or ardour of promoting knowledge, has prompted the prescription, all which writers have received, had not the same original right to our regard. Some are to be considered as fundamental and indispensable, others only as useful and convenient; some as dictated by reason and necessity, others as enacted by despotick antiquity; some as invincibly supported by their conformity to the order of nature and operations of the intellect; others as formed by accident, or instituted by example, and therefore always liable to dispute and alteration.

That many rules have been advanced without consulting nature or reason, we cannot but suspect, when we find it peremptorily decreed by the ancient masters, that *only three speaking personages should appear at once upon the stage;* a law, which, as the variety and intricacy of modern plays has made it impossible to be observed, we now violate without scruple, and, as experience proves, without inconvenience.

The original of this precept was merely accidental. Tragedy was a monody, or solitary song in honour of Bacchus, improved afterwards into a dialogue by the addition of another speaker; but the ancients, remembering that the tragedy was at first pronounced only by one, durst not, for some time, venture beyond two; at last, when custom and impunity had made them daring, they extended their liberty to the admission of three, but restrained themselves by a critical edict from further exorbitance.

By what accident the number of acts was limited to five I know not that any author has informed us; but certainly it is not determined by any necessity arising either from the nature of action, or propriety of exhibition. An act is only the representation of such a part of the business of the play as proceeds in an unbroken tenour, or without any

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intermediate pause. Nothing is more evident than that of every real, and, by consequence, of every dramatick action, the intervals may be more or fewer than five; and, indeed, the rule is, upon the English stage, every day broken in effect, without any other mischief than that which arises from an absurd endeavour to observe it in appearance. Whenever the scene is shifted, the act ceases, since some time is necessarily supposed to elapse while the personages of the drama change their place.

With no greater right to our obedience have the criticks confined the dramatick action to a certain number of hours. Probability requires that the time of action should approach somewhat nearly to that of exhibition, and those plays will always be thought most happily conducted which crowd the greatest variety into the least space. But since it will frequently happen that some delusion must be admitted, I know not where the limits of imagination can be fixed. It is rarely observed that minds, not prepossessed by mechanical criticism, feel any offence from the extension of the intervals between the acts; nor can I conceive it absurd or impossible, that he who can multiply three hours into twelve or twenty-four, might imagine with equal ease a greater number.

I know not whether he that professes to regard no other laws than those of nature, will not be inclined to receive tragi-comedy to his protection, whom, however generally condemned, her own laurels have hitherto shaded from the fulminations of criticism. For what is there in the mingled drama which impartial reason can condemn? The connexion of important with trivial incidents, since it is not only common but perpetual in the world, may surely be allowed upon the stage, which pretends only to be the mirror of life. The impropriety of suppressing passions before we have raised them to the intended agitation, and of diverting the expectation from an event which we keep suspended only to raise it, may be speciously urged. But will not experience show this objection to be rather subtle than just? Is it not certain that the tragick and comick

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affections have been moved alternately with equal force, and that no plays have oftener filled the eye with tears, and the breast with palpitation, than those which are variegated with interludes of mirth?

I do not, however, think it safe to judge of works of genius merely by the event. The resistless vicissitudes of the heart, this alternate prevalence of merriment and solemnity, may sometimes be more properly ascribed to the vigour of the writer than the justness of the design: and, instead of vindicating tragicomedy by the success of Shakespeare, we ought, perhaps, to pay new honours to that transcendent and unbounded genius that could preside over the passions in sport; who, to actuate the affections, needed not the slow gradation of common means, but could fill the heart with instantaneous jollity or sorrow, and vary our disposition as he changed his scenes. Perhaps the effects even of Shakespeare's poetry might have been yet greater, had he not counteracted himself; and we might have been more interested in the distresses of his heroes, had we not been so frequently diverted by the jokes of his buffoons.

There are other rules more fixed and obligatory. It is necessary that of every play the chief action should be single; for since a play represents some transaction, through its regular maturation to its final event, two actions equally important must evidently constitute two plays.

As the design of tragedy is to instruct by moving the passions, it must always have a hero, a personage apparently and incontestably superiour to the rest, upon whom the attention may be fixed, and the anxiety suspended. For though, of two persons opposing each other with equal abilities and equal virtue, the auditor will inevitably, in time, choose his favourite, yet as that choice must be without any cogency of conviction, the hopes or fears which it raises will be faint and languid. Of two heroes acting in confederacy against a common enemy, the virtues or dangers will give little emotion, because each claims our concern with the same right, and the heart lies at rest between equal motives.

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It ought to be the first endeavour of a writer to distinguish nature from custom; or that which is established because it is right, from that which is right only because it is established; that he may neither violate essential principles by a desire of novelty, nor debar himself from the attainment of beauties within his view, by a needless fear of breaking rules which no literary dictator had authority to enact.

N°. 157. TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 17, 1751.

——————————Οἱ αἰδὼς
Γίνεται, ἢ τ' ἄνδρας μέγα σίνεται, ἠδ' ὀνίνησι. HOM. Il. Ω'. 44.
Shame greatly hurts or greatly helps mankind. ELPHINSTON.

TO THE RAMBLER.

SIR,

THOUGH one of your correspondents has presumed to mention with some contempt that presence of attention and easiness of address, which the polite have long agreed to celebrate and esteem, yet I cannot be persuaded to think them unworthy of regard or cultivation; but am inclined to believe that, as we seldom value rightly what we have never known the misery of wanting, his judgment has been vitiated by his happiness; and that a natural exuberance of assurance has hindered him from discovering its excellence and use.

This felicity, whether bestowed by constitution, or obtained by early habitudes, I can scarcely contemplate without envy. I was bred under a man of learning in the country, who inculcated nothing but the dignity of knowledge, and the happiness of virtue. By frequency of admonition, and confidence of assertion, he prevailed upon me to believe, that the splendour of literature would always attract reverence, if not darkened by corruption. I therefore pursued my studies with incessant industry, and avoided every thing which I had been taught to con-

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sider either as vitious or tending to vice, because I regarded guilt and reproach as inseparably united, and thought a tainted reputation the greatest calamity.

At the university, I found no reason for changing my opinion; for though many among my fellow students took the opportunity of a more remiss discipline to gratify their passions; yet virtue preserved her natural superiority, and those who ventured to neglect, were not suffered to insult her. The ambition of petty accomplishments found its way into the receptacles of learning, but was observed to seize commonly on those who either neglected the sciences or could not attain them; and I was therefore confirmed in the doctrines of my old master, and thought nothing worthy of my care but the means of gaining or imparting knowledge.

This purity of manners, and intenseness of application, soon extended my renown, and I was applauded by those, whose opinion I then thought unlikely to deceive me, as a young man that gave uncommon hopes of future eminence. My performances in time reached my native province, and my relations congratulated themselves upon the new honours that were added to their family.

I returned home covered with academical laurels, and fraught with criticism and philosophy. The wit and the scholar excited curiosity, and my acquaintance was solicited by innumerable invitations. To please will always be the wish of benevolence; to be admired must be the constant aim of ambition; and I therefore considered myself as about to receive the reward of my honest labours, and to find the efficacy of learning and of virtue.

The third day after my arrival I dined at the house of a gentleman who had summoned a multitude of his friends to the annual celebration of his wedding-day. I set forward with great exultation, and thought myself happy that I had an opportunity of displaying my knowledge to so numerous an assembly. I felt no sense of my own insufficiency, till, going up stairs to the dining-room, I heard the mingled roar of obstreperous merriment. I was, how-

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ever, disgusted rather than terrified, and went forward without dejection. The whole company rose at my entrance; but when I saw so many eyes fixed at once upon me, I was blasted with a sudden imbecility, I was quelled by some nameless power which I found impossible to be resisted. My sight was dazzled, my cheeks glowed, my perceptions were confounded; I was harassed by the multitude of eager salutations, and returned the common civilities with hesitation and impropriety; the sense of my own blunders increased my confusion, and, before the exchange of ceremonies allowed me to sit down, I was ready to sink under the oppression of surprise; my voice grew weak, and my knees trembled.

The assembly then resumed their places, and I sat with my eyes fixed upon the ground. To the questions of curiosity, or the appeals of complaisance, I could seldom answer but with negative monosyllables, or professions of ignorance; for the subjects on which they conversed, were such as are seldom discussed in books, and were therefore out of my range of knowledge. At length an old clergyman, who rightly conjectured the reason of my conciseness, relieved me by some questions about the present state of natural knowledge, and engaged me by an appearance of doubt and opposition, in the explication and defence of the Newtonian philosophy.

The consciousness of my own abilities roused me from depression, and long familiarity with my subject enabled me to discourse with ease and volubility; but, however I might please myself, I found very little added by my demonstrations to the satisfaction of the company; and my antagonist, who knew the laws of conversation too well to detain their attention long upon an unpleasing topick, after he had commended my acuteness and comprehension, dismissed the controversy, and resigned me to my former insignificance and perplexity.

After dinner, I received from the ladies, who had heard that I was a wit, an invitation to the tea-table. I congratulated myself upon an opportunity to escape from the

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company, whose gaiety began to be tumultuous, and among whom several hints had been dropped of the uselessness of universities, the folly of book-learning, and the awkwardness of scholars. To the ladies, therefore, I flew, as to a refuge from clamour, insult, and rusticity; but found my heart sink as I approached their apartment, and was again disconcerted by the ceremonies of entrance, and confounded by the necessity of encountering so many eyes at once.

When I sat down I considered that something pretty was always said to ladies, and resolved to recover my credit by some elegant observation or graceful compliment. I applied myself to the recollection of all that I had read or heard in praise of beauty, and endeavoured to accommodate some classical compliment to the present occasion. I sunk into profound meditation, revolved the characters of the heroines of old, considered whatever the poets have sung in their praise; and, after having borrowed and invented, chosen and rejected a thousand sentiments, which, if I had uttered them, would not have been understood, I was awakened from my dream of learned gallantry, by the servant who distributed the tea.

There are not many situations more incessantly uneasy than that in which the man is placed who is watching an opportunity to speak, without courage to take it when it is offered; and who, though he resolves to give a specimen of his abilities, always finds some reason or other for delaying it to the next minute. I was ashamed of silence, yet could find nothing to say of elegance or importance equal to my wishes. The ladies, afraid of my learning, thought themselves not qualified to propose any subject of prattle to a man so famous for dispute, and there was nothing on either side but impatience and vexation.

In this conflict of shame, as I was reassembling my scattered sentiments, and, resolving to force my imagination to some sprightly sally, had just found a very happy compliment, by too much attention to my own meditations, I suffered the saucer to drop from my hand. The cup was

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broken, the lapdog was scalded, a brocaded petticoat was stained, and the whole assembly was thrown into disorder. I now considered all hopes of reputation at an end, and while they were consoling and assisting one another, stole away in silence.

The misadventures of this unhappy day are not yet at an end; I am afraid of meeting the meanest of them that triumphed over me in this state of stupidity and contempt, and feel the same terrours encroaching upon my heart at the sight of those who have once impressed them. Shame, above any other passion, propagates itself. Before those who have seen me confused, I can never appear without new confusion, and the remembrance of the weakness which I formerly discovered, hinders me from acting or speaking with my natural force.

But is this misery, Mr. Rambler, never to cease; have I spent my life in study only to become the sport of the ignorant, and debarred myself from all the common enjoyments of youth to collect ideas which must sleep in silence, and form opinions which I must not divulge? Inform me, dear sir, by what means I may rescue my faculties from these shackles of cowardice, how I may rise to a level with my fellow-beings, recall myself from this languor of involuntary subjection to the free exertion of my intellects, and add to the power of reasoning the liberty of speech.

I am, sir, &c.

VERECUNDULUS.

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N°. 158. SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 21, 1751.

Grammatici certant, et adhuc sub judice lis est. HOR. Ar. Poet. 78.

——————Criticks yet contend,
And of their vain disputings find no end. FRANCIS.

CRITICISM, though dignified from the earliest ages by the labours of men eminent for knowledge and sagacity, and, since the revival of polite literature, the favourite study of European scholars, has not yet attained the certainty and stability of science. The rules hitherto received are seldom drawn from any settled principle or self-evident postulate, or adapted to the natural and invariable constitution of things; but will be found, upon examination, the arbitrary edicts of legislators, authorized only by themselves, who, out of various means by which the same end may be attained, selected such as happened to occur to their own reflection, and then, by a law which idleness and timidity were too willing to obey, prohibited new experiments of wit, restrained fancy from the indulgence of her innate inclination to hazard and adventure, and condemned all future flights of genius to pursue the path of the Meonian eagle.

This authority may be more justly opposed, as it is apparently derived from them whom they endeavour to control; for we owe few of the rules of writing to the acuteness of criticks, who have generally no other merit than that, having read the works of great authors with attention, they have observed the arrangement of their matter, or the graces of their expression, and then expected honour and reverence for precepts which they never could have invented; so that practice has introduced rules, rather than rules have directed practice.

For this reason the laws of every species of writing have been settled by the ideas of him who first raised it to reputation, without inquiry whether his performances were not yet susceptible of improvement. The excellencies and

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faults of celebrated writers have been equally recommended to posterity; and, so far has this blind reverence prevailed, that even the number of their books has been thought worthy of imitation.

The imagination of the first authors of lyrick poetry was vehement and rapid, and their knowledge various and extensive. Living in an age when science had been little cultivated, and when the minds of their auditors, not being accustomed to accurate inspection, were easily dazzled by glaring ideas, they applied themselves to instruct, rather by short sentences and striking thoughts, than by regular argumentation; and, finding attention more successfully excited by sudden sallies and unexpected exclamations, than by the more artful and placid beauties of methodical deduction, they loosed their genius to its own course, passed from one sentiment to another without expressing the intermediate ideas, and roved at large over the ideal world with such lightness and agility, that their footsteps are scarcely to be traced.

From this accidental peculiarity of the ancient writers, the criticks deduce the rules of lyric poetry, which they have set free from all the laws by which other compositions are confined, and allow to neglect the niceties of transition, to start into remote digressions, and to wander without restraint from one scene of imagery to another.

A writer of later times has, by the vivacity of his essays, reconciled mankind to the same licentiousness in short dissertations; and he, therefore, who wants skill to form a plan, or diligence to pursue it, needs only entitle his performance an essay, to acquire the right of heaping together the collections of half his life, without order, coherence, or propriety.

In writing, as in life, faults are endured without disgust when they are associated with transcendent merit, and may be sometimes recommended to weak judgments by the lustre which they obtain from their union with excellence; but it is the business of those who presume to superintend

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the taste or morals of mankind, to separate delusive combinations, and distinguish that which may be praised from that which can only be excused. As vices never promote happiness, though, when overpowered by more active and more numerous virtues, they cannot totally destroy it; so confusion and irregularity produce no beauty, though they cannot always obstruct the brightness of genius and learning. To proceed from one truth to another, and connect distant propositions by regular consequences, is the great prerogative of man. Independent and unconnected sentiments flashing upon the mind in quick succession, may, for a time, delight by their novelty, but they differ from systematical reasoning, as single notes from harmony, as glances of lightning from the radiance of the sun.

When rules are thus drawn, rather from precedents than reason, there is danger not only from the faults of an author, but from the errours of those who criticise his works; since they may often mislead their pupils by false representations, as the Ciceronians of the sixteenth century were betrayed into barbarisms by corrupt copies of their darling writer.

It is established at present, that the proemial lines of a poem, in which the general subject is proposed, must be void of glitter and embellishment. "The first lines of Paradise Lost," says Addison, "are perhaps as plain, simple, and unadorned, as any of the whole poem, in which particular the author has conformed himself to the example of Homer, and the precept of Horace."

This observation seems to have been made by an implicit adoption of the common opinion, without consideration either of the precept or example. Had Horace been consulted, he would have been found to direct only what should be comprised in the proposition, not how it should be expressed; and to have commended Homer, in opposition to a meaner poet, not for the gradual elevation of his diction, but the judicious expansion of his plan; for

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displaying unpromised events, not for producing unexpected elegancies:

——*Speciosa dehinc miracula promat;*
Antiphaten, Scyllamque, et cum Cyclope Charybdim. Hor. Ar. Poet. 144.

But from a cloud of smoke he breaks to light,
And pours his specious miracles to sight;
Antiphates his hideous feast devours,
Charybdis barks, and Polyphemus roars. Francis.

If the exordial verses of Homer be compared with the rest of the poem, they will not appear remarkable for plainness or simplicity, but rather eminently adorned and illuminated:

Ἄνδρα μοι ἔννεπε, Μοῦσα, πολύτροπον, ὃς μάλα πολλὰ
Πλάγχθη, ἐπεὶ Τροίης ἱερὸν πτολίεθρον ἔπερσε·
Πολλῶν δ' ἀνθρώπων ἴδεν ἄστεα, καὶ νόον ἔγνω·
Πολλὰ δ' ὅγ' ἐν πόντῳ πάθεν ἄλγεα ὃν κατὰ θυμὸν,
Ἀρνύμενος ἥν τε ψυχὴν καὶ νόστον ἑταίρων·
Ἀλλ' οὐδ' ὣς ἑτάρους ἐρρύσατο, ἱέμενός περ·
Αὐτῶν γὰρ σφετέρῃσιν ἀτασθαλίῃσιν ὄλοντο·
Νήπιοι, οἳ κατά βοῦς ὑπερίονος Ἠελίοιο
Ἤσθιον· αὐτὰρ ὁ τοῖσιν ἀφείλετο νόστιμον ἦμαρ·
Τῶν ἀμόθεν γε, θεὰ, θύγατερ Διὸς, εἰπὲ καὶ ἡμῖν.

The man, for wisdom's various arts renown'd,
Long exercised in woes, O muse! resound;
Who, when his arms had wrought the destin'd fall
Of sacred Troy, and raz'd her heav'n-built wall,
Wandering from clime to clime, observant stray'd,
Their manners noted, and their states survey'd.
On stormy seas unnumber'd toils he bore,
Safe with his friends to gain his natal shore:
Vain toils! their impious folly dar'd to prey
On herds devoted to the god of day;
The god vindictive doom'd them never more
(Ah! men unbless'd) to touch that natal shore.
O snatch some portion of these acts from fate,
Celestial muse! and to our world relate. Pope.

The first verses of the Iliad are, in like manner, particularly splendid, and the proposition of the Æneid closes with dignity and magnificence not often to be found even in the poetry of Virgil.

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The intent of the introduction is to raise expectation, and suspend it; something therefore must be discovered, and something concealed; and the poet, while the fertility of his invention is yet unknown, may properly recommend himself by the grace of his language.

He that reveals too much, or promises too little; he that never irritates the intellectual appetite, or that immediately satiates it, equally defeats his own purpose. It is necessary to the pleasure of the reader, that the events should not be anticipated, and how then can his attention be invited, but by grandeur of expression?

N°. 159. TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 24, 1751.

Sunt verba et voces, quibus hunc lenire dolorem
Possis, et magnam morbi deponere partem. HOR. Ep. Lib. i. 34.

The power of words, and soothing sounds, appease
The raging pain, and lessen the disease. FRANCIS.

THE imbecility with which Verecundulus complains that the presence of a numerous assembly freezes his faculties, is particularly incident to the studious part of mankind, whose education necessarily secludes them in their earlier years from mingled converse, till, at their dismission from schools and academies, they plunge at once into the tumult of the world, and, coming forth from the gloom of solitude, are overpowered by the blaze of publick life.

It is, perhaps, kindly provided by nature, that as the feathers and strength of a bird grow together, and her wings are not completed till she is able to fly, so some proportion should be preserved in the human kind between judgment and courage; the precipitation of inexperience is therefore restrained by shame, and we remain shackled by timidity, till we have learned to speak and act with propriety.

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I believe few can review the days of their youth without recollecting temptations, which shame, rather than virtue, enabled them to resist; and opinions which, however erroneous in their principles, and dangerous in their consequences, they have panted to advance at the hazard of contempt and hatred, when they found themselves irresistibly depressed by a languid anxiety, which seized them at the moment of utterance, and still gathered strength from their endeavours to resist it.

It generally happens that assurance keeps an even pace with ability; and the fear of miscarriage, which hinders our first attempts, is gradually dissipated as our skill advances towards certainty of success. That bashfulness, therefore, which prevents disgrace, that short and temporary shame which secures us from the danger of lasting reproach, cannot be properly counted among our misfortunes.

Bashfulness, however it may incommode for a moment, scarcely ever produces evils of long continuance; it may flush the cheek, flutter in the heart, deject the eyes, and enchain the tongue, but its mischiefs soon pass off without remembrance. It may sometimes exclude pleasure, but seldom opens any avenue to sorrow or remorse. It is observed somewhere, that *few have repented of having forborne to speak.*

To excite opposition, and inflame malevolence, is the unhappy privilege of courage made arrogant by consciousness of strength. No man finds in himself any inclination to attack or oppose him who confesses his superiority by blushing in his presence. Qualities exerted with apparent fearfulness, receive applause from every voice, and support from every hand. Diffidence may check resolution and obstruct performance, but compensates its embarassments by more important advantages; it conciliates the proud, and softens the severe, averts envy from excellence, and censure from miscarriage.

It may indeed happen, that knowledge and virtue remain too long congealed by this frigorifick power, as the prin-

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ciples of vegetation are sometimes obstructed by lingering frosts. He that enters late into a public station, though with all the abilities requisite to the discharge of his duty, will find his powers at first impeded by a timidity which he himself knows to be vitious, and must struggle long against dejection and reluctance, before he obtains the full command of his own attention, and adds the gracefulness of ease to the dignity of merit.

For this disease of the mind, I know not whether any remedies of much efficacy can be found. To advise a man unaccustomed to the eyes of multitudes to mount a tribunal without perturbation, to tell him whose life was passed in the shades of contemplation, that he must not be disconcerted or perplexed in receiving and returning the compliments of a splendid assembly, is to advise an inhabitant of Brazil or Sumatra not to shiver at an English winter, or him who has always lived upon a plain to look from a precipice without emotion. It is to suppose custom instantaneously controllable by reason, and to endeavour to communicate, by precept, that which only time and habit can bestow.

He that hopes by philosophy and contemplation alone to fortify himself against that awe which all, at their first appearance on the stage of life, must feel from the spectators, will, at the hour of need, be mocked by his resolution; and I doubt whether the preservatives which Plato relates Alcibiades to have received from Socrates, when he was about to speak in publick, proved sufficient to secure him from the powerful fascination.

Yet, as the effects of time may, by art and industry, be accelerated or retarded, it cannot be improper to consider how this troublesome instinct may be opposed when it exceeds its just proportion, and instead of repressing petulance and temerity, silences eloquence, and debilitates force; since, though it cannot be hoped that anxiety should be immediately dissipated, it may be at least somewhat abated; and the passions will operate with less violence, when reason rises against them, than while she

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either slumbers in neutrality, or, mistaking her interest, lends them her assistance.

No cause more frequently produces bashfulness than too high an opinion of our own importance. He that imagines an assembly filled with his merit, panting with expectation, and hushed with attention, easily terrifies himself with the dread of disappointing them, and strains his imagination in pursuit of something that may vindicate the veracity of fame, and show that his reputation was not gained by chance. He considers that what he shall say or do will never be forgotten; that renown or infamy is suspended upon every syllable, and that nothing ought to fall from him which will not bear the test of time. Under such solicitude, who can wonder that the mind is overwhelmed, and, by struggling with attempts above her strength, quickly sinks into languishment and despondency?

The most useful medicines are often unpleasing to the taste. Those who are oppressed by their own reputation, will, perhaps, not be comforted by hearing that their cares are unnecessary. But the truth is, that no man is much regarded by the rest of the world. He that considers how little he dwells upon the condition of others, will learn how little the attention of others is attracted by himself. While we see multitudes passing before us, of whom, perhaps, not one appears to deserve our notice, or excite our sympathy, we should remember, that we likewise are lost in the same throng; that the eye which happens to glance upon us is turned in a moment on him that follows us, and that the utmost which we can reasonably hope or fear is, to fill a vacant hour with prattle, and be forgotten.

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N°. 160. SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 28, 1751.

———*Inter se convenit ursis.* Juv. Sat. xv. 164.

Beasts of each kind their fellows spare;
Bear lives in amity with bear.

"THE world," says Locke, "has people of all sorts." As in the general hurry produced by the superfluities of some, and necessities of others, no man needs to stand still for want of employment, so in the innumerable gradations of ability, and endless varieties of study and inclination, no employment can be vacant for want of a man qualified to discharge it.

Such is probably the natural state of the universe; but it is so much deformed by interest and passion, that the benefit of this adaptation of men to things is not always perceived. The folly or indigence of those who set their services to sale, inclines them to boast of qualifications which they do not possess, and attempt business which they do not understand; and they who have the power of assigning to others the task of life, are seldom honest or seldom happy in their nominations. Patrons are corrupted by avarice, cheated by credulity, or overpowered by resistless solicitation. They are sometimes too strongly influenced by honest prejudices of friendship, or the prevalence of virtuous compassion. For, whatever cool reason may direct, it is not easy for a man of tender and scrupulous goodness to overlook the immediate effect of his own actions, by turning his eyes upon remoter consequences, and to do that which must give present pain, for the sake of obviating evil yet unfelt, or securing advantage in time to come. What is distant is in itself obscure, and, when we have no wish to see it, easily escapes our notice, or takes such a form as desire or imagination bestows upon it.

Every man might, for the same reason, in the multitudes that swarm about him, find some kindred mind with which he could unite in confidence and friendship; yet we see

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many straggling single about the world, unhappy for want of an associate, and pining with the necessity of confining their sentiments to their own bosoms.

This inconvenience arises, in like manner, from struggles of the will against the understanding. It is not often difficult to find a suitable companion, if every man would be content with such as he is qualified to please. But if vanity tempts him to forsake his rank, and post himself among those with whom no common interest or mutual pleasure can ever unite him, he must always live in a state of unsocial separation, without tenderness and without trust.

There are many natures which can never approach within a certain distance, and which, when any irregular motive impels them towards contact, seem to start back from each other by some invincible repulsion. There are others which immediately cohere whenever they come into the reach of mutual attraction, and with very little formality of preparation mingle intimately as soon as they meet. Every man, whom either business or curiosity has thrown at large into the world, will recollect many instances of fondness and dislike, which have forced themselves upon him without the intervention of his judgment; of dispositions to court some and avoid others, when he could assign no reason for the preference, or none adequate to the violence of his passions; of influence that acted instantaneously upon his mind, and which no arguments or persuasions could ever overcome.

Among those with whom time and intercourse have made us familiar, we feel our affections divided in different proportions without much regard to moral or intellectual merit. Every man knows some whom he cannot induce himself to trust, though he has no reason to suspect that they would betray him; those to whom he cannot complain, though he never observed them to want compassion; those in whose presence he never can be gay, though excited by invitations to mirth and freedom; and those from whom

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he cannot be content to receive instruction, though they never insulted his ignorance by contempt or ostentation.

That much regard is to be had to those instincts of kindness and dislike, or that reason should blindly follow them, I am far from intending to inculcate: it is very certain, that by indulgence we may give them strength which they have not from nature, and almost every example of ingratitude and treachery proves, that by obeying them we may commit our happiness to those who are very unworthy of so great a trust. But it may deserve to be remarked, that since few contend much with their inclinations, it is generally vain to solicit the good-will of those whom we perceive thus involuntarily alienated from us; neither knowledge nor virtue will reconcile antipathy, and though officiousness may be for a time admitted, and diligence applauded, they will at last be dismissed with coldness, or discouraged by neglect.

Some have, indeed, an occult power of stealing upon the affections, of exciting universal benevolence, and disposing every heart to fondness and friendship. But this is a felicity granted only to the favourites of nature. The greater part of mankind find a different reception from different dispositions; they sometimes obtain unexpected caresses from those whom they never flattered with uncommon regard, and sometimes exhaust all their arts of pleasing without effect. To these it is necessary to look round, and attempt every breast in which they find virtue sufficient for the foundation of friendship; to enter into the crowd, and try whom chance will offer to their notice, till they fix on some temper congenial to their own, as the magnet rolled in the dust collects the fragments of its kindred metal from a thousand particles of other substances.

Every man must have remarked the facility with which the kindness of others is sometimes gained by those to whom he never could have imparted his own. We are, by our occupations, education, and habits of life, divided

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almost into different species, which regard one another, for the most part, with scorn and malignity. Each of these classes of the human race has desires, fears, and conversation, vexations and merriment, peculiar to itself; cares which another cannot feel; pleasures which he cannot partake; and modes of expressing every sensation which he cannot understand. That frolick which shakes one man with laughter, will convulse another with indignation; the strain of jocularity which in one place obtains treats and patronage, would in another be heard with indifference, and in a third with abhorrence.

To raise esteem we must benefit others, to procure love we must please them. Aristotle observes, that old men do not readily form friendships, because they are not easily susceptible of pleasure. He that can contribute to the hilarity of the vacant hour, or partake with equal gust the favourite amusement; he whose mind is employed on the same objects, and who, therefore, never harasses the understanding with unaccustomed ideas, will be welcomed with ardour, and left with regret, unless he destroys those recommendations by faults with which peace and security cannot consist.

It were happy, if, in forming friendships, virtue could concur with pleasure; but the greatest part of human gratifications approach so nearly to vice, that few who make the delight of others their rule of conduct, can avoid disingenuous compliances; yet certainly he that suffers himself to be driven or allured from virtue, mistakes his own interest, since he gains succour by means, for which his friend, if ever he becomes wise, must scorn him, and for which, at last, he must scorn himself.

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N°. 161. TUESDAY, OCTOBER 1, 1751.

Οἵη γαρ φύλλων γενεὴ, τοίηδε καὶ Ἀνδρων. Hom. Il. Τ'.

Frail as the leaves that quiver on the sprays,
Like them man flourishes, like them decays.

MR. RAMBLER.

SIR,

YOU have formerly observed that curiosity often terminates in barren knowledge, and that the mind is prompted to study and inquiry rather by the uneasiness of ignorance, than the hope of profit. Nothing can be of less importance to any present interest, than the fortune of those who have been long lost in the grave, and from whom nothing now can be hoped or feared. Yet, to rouse the zeal of a true antiquary, little more is necessary than to mention a name which mankind have conspired to forget; he will make his way to remote scenes of action, through obscurity and contradiction, as Tully sought amidst bushes and brambles the tomb of Archimedes.

It is not easy to discover how it concerns him that gathers the produce, or receives the rent of an estate, to know through what families the land has passed, who is registered in the Conqueror's survey as its possessor, how often it has been forfeited by treason, or how often sold by prodigality. The power or wealth of the present inhabitants of a country cannot be much increased by an inquiry after the names of those barbarians, who destroyed one another twenty centuries ago, in contests for the shelter of woods, or convenience of pasturage. Yet we see that no man can be at rest in the enjoyment of a new purchase till he has learned the history of his grounds from the ancient inhabitants of the parish, and that no nation omits to record the actions of their ancestors, however bloody, savage, and rapacious.

The same disposition, as different opportunities call it forth, discovers itself in great or little things. I have al-

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ways thought it unworthy of a wise man to slumber in total inactivity, only because he happens to have no employment equal to his ambition or genius; it is, therefore, my custom to apply my attention to the objects before me, and as I cannot think any place wholly unworthy of notice that affords a habitation to a man of letters, I have collected the history and antiquities of the several garrets in which I have resided:

Quantulacunque estis, vos ego magna voco.
How small to others, but how great to me!

Many of these narratives my industry has been able to extend to a considerable length; but the woman with whom I now lodge has lived only eighteen months in the house, and can give no account of its ancient revolutions; the plasterer having, at her entrance, obliterated, by his whitewash, all the smoky memorials which former tenants had left upon the ceiling, and perhaps drawn the veil of oblivion over politicians, philosophers, and poets.

When I first cheapened my lodgings, the landlady told me, that she hoped I was not an author, for the lodgers on the first floor had stipulated that the upper rooms should not be occupied by a noisy trade. I very readily promised to give no disturbance to her family, and soon despatched a bargain on the usual terms.

I had not slept many nights in my new apartment before I began to inquire after my predecessors, and found my landlady, whose imagination is filled chiefly with her own affairs, very ready to give me information.

Curiosity, like all other desires, produces pain as well as pleasure. Before she began her narrative, I had heated my head with expectations of adventures and discoveries, of elegance in disguise, and learning in distress; and was somewhat mortified when I heard that the first tenant was a tailor, of whom nothing was remembered but that he complained of his room for want of light; and, after having lodged in it a month, and paid only a week's rent, pawned a piece of cloth which he was trusted to

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cut out, and was forced to make a precipitate retreat from this quarter of the town.

The next was a young woman newly arrived from the country, who lived for five weeks with great regularity, and became by frequent treats very much the favourite of the family, but at last received visits so frequently from a cousin in Cheapside, that she brought the reputation of the house into danger, and was therefore dismissed with good advice.

The room then stood empty for a fortnight; my landlady began to think that she had judged hardly, and often wished for such another lodger. At last, an elderly man of a grave aspect read the bill, and bargained for the room at the very first price that was asked. He lived in close retirement, seldom went out till evening, and then returned early, sometimes cheerful, and at other times dejected. It was remarkable, that whatever he purchased, he never had small money in his pocket; and, though cool and temperate on other occasions, was always vehement and stormy till he received his change. He paid his rent with great exactness, and seldom failed once a week to requite my landlady's civility with a supper. At last, such is the fate of human felicity, the house was alarmed at midnight by the constable, who demanded to search the garrets. My landlady assuring him that he had mistaken the door, conducted him up stairs, where he found the tools of a coiner; but the tenant had crawled along the roof to an empty house, and escaped; much to the joy of my landlady, who declares him a very honest man, and wonders why any body should be hanged for making money when such numbers are in want of it. She however confesses that she shall, for the future, always question the character of those who take her garret without beating down the price.

The bill was then placed again in the window, and the poor woman was teased for seven weeks by innumerable passengers, who obliged her to climb with them every hour up five stories, and then disliked the prospect, hated

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the noise of a publick street, thought the stairs narrow, objected to a low ceiling, required the walls to be hung with fresher paper, asked questions about the neighbourhood, could not think of living so far from their acquaintance, wished the windows had looked to the south rather than the west, told how the door and chimney might have been better disposed, bid her half the price that she asked, or promised to give her earnest the next day, and came no more.

At last, a short meagre man, in a tarnished waistcoat, desired to see the garret, and when he had stipulated for two long shelves, and a larger table, hired it at a low rate. When the affair was completed, he looked round him with great satisfaction, and repeated some words which the woman did not understand. In two days he brought a great box of books, took possession of his room, and lived very inoffensively, except that he frequently disturbed the inhabitants of the next floor by unseasonable noises. He was generally in bed at noon, but from evening to midnight he sometimes talked aloud with great vehemence, sometimes stamped as in rage, sometimes threw down his poker, then clattered his chairs, then sat down in deep thought, and again burst out into loud vociferations; sometimes he would sigh, as oppressed with misery, and sometimes shake with convulsive laughter. When he encountered any of the family, he gave way or bowed, but rarely spoke, except that as he went up stairs he often repeated,

——'Ος ὑπέρτατα δώματα ναίει.

This habitant th' aerial regions boast;

hard words, to which his neighbours listened so often, that they learned them without understanding them. What was his employment she did not venture to ask him, but at last heard a printer's boy inquire for the author.

My landlady was very often advised to beware of this strange man, who, though he was quiet for the present, might, perhaps, become outrageous in the hot months; but,

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as she was punctually paid, she could not find any sufficient reason for dismissing him, till one night he convinced her, by setting fire to his curtains, that it was not safe to have an author for her inmate.

She had then, for six weeks, a succession of tenants, who left the house on Saturday, and, instead of paying their rent, stormed at their landlady. At last she took in two sisters, one of whom had spent her little fortune in procuring remedies for a lingering disease, and was now supported and attended by the other: she climbed with difficulty to the apartment, where she languished eight weeks without impatience, or lamentation, except for the expense and fatigue which her sister suffered, and then calmly and contentedly expired. The sister followed her to the grave, paid the few debts which they had contracted, wiped away the tears of useless sorrow, and, returning to the business of common life, resigned to me the vacant habitation.

Such, Mr. Rambler, are the changes which have happened in the narrow space where my present fortune has fixed my residence. So true is it that amusement and instruction are always at hand for those who have skill and willingness to find them; and, so just is the observation of Juvenal, that a single house will show whatever is done or suffered in the world.

I am, sir, &c.

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N°. 162. SATURDAY, OCTOBER 5, 1751.

Orbus es, et locuples, et Bruto consule natus,
Esse tibi verus credis amicitias?
Sunt veræ: sed quas juvenis, quas pauper habebas:
Qui novus est, mortem diligit ille tuam. MART. Lib. xi. Ep. 44.

What! old, and rich, and childless too,
And yet believe your friends are true?
Truth might perhaps to those belong,
To those who lov'd you poor and young;
But, trust me, for the new you have,
They'll love you dearly—in your grave. F. LEWIS.

ONE of the complaints uttered by Milton's Samson, in the anguish of blindness, is, that he shall pass his life under the direction of others; that he cannot regulate his conduct by his own knowledge, but must lie at the mercy of those who undertake to guide him.

There is no state more contrary to the dignity of wisdom than perpetual and unlimited dependence, in which the understanding lies useless, and every motion is received from external impulse. Reason is the great distinction of human nature, the faculty by which we approach to some degree of association with celestial intelligences; but as the excellence of every power appears only in its operations, not to have reason, and to have it useless and unemployed, is nearly the same.

Such is the weakness of man, that the essence of things is seldom so much regarded as external and accidental appendages. A small variation of trifling circumstances, a slight change of form by an artificial dress, or a casual difference of appearance, by a new light and situation, will conciliate affection or excite abhorrence, and determine us to pursue or to avoid. Every man considers a necessity of compliance with any will but his own, as the lowest state of ignominy and meanness; few are so far lost in cowardice or negligence, as not to rouse at the first insult of tyranny, and exert all their force against him who usurps their property, or invades any privilege of speech or ac-

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tion. Yet we see often those who never wanted spirit to repel encroachment or oppose violence, at last, by a gradual relaxation of vigilance, delivering up, without capitulation, the fortress which they defended against assault, and laying down unbidden the weapons which they grasped the harder for every attempt to wrest them from their hands. Men eminent for spirit and wisdom often resign themselves to voluntary pupilage, and suffer their lives to be modelled by officious ignorance, and their choice to be regulated by presumptuous stupidity.

This unresisting acquiescence in the determination of others, may be the consequence of application to some study remote from the beaten track of life, some employment which does not allow leisure for sufficient inspection of those petty affairs, by which nature has decreed a great part of our duration to be filled. To a mind thus withdrawn from common objects, it is more eligible to repose on the prudence of another, than to be exposed every moment to slight interruptions. The submission which such confidence requires, is paid without pain, because it implies no confession of inferiority. The business from which we withdraw our cognizance, is not above our abilities, but below our notice. We please our pride with the effects of our influence thus weakly exerted, and fancy ourselves placed in a higher orb, from which we regulate subordinate agents by a slight and distant superintendence. But, whatever vanity or abstraction may suggest, no man can safely do that by others which might be done by himself; he that indulges negligence will quickly become ignorant of his own affairs; and he that trusts without reserve will at last be deceived.

It is, however, impossible but that, as the attention tends strongly towards one thing, it must retire from another; and he that omits the care of domestick business, because he is engrossed by inquiries of more importance to mankind, has, at least, the merit of suffering in a good cause. But there are many who can plead no such extenuation of their folly; who shake off the burden of their station, not

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that they may soar with less incumbrance to the heights of knowledge or virtue, but that they may loiter at ease and sleep in quiet; and who select for friendship and confidence, not the faithful and the virtuous, but the soft, the civil, and compliant.

This openness to flattery is the common disgrace of declining life. When men feel weakness increasing on them, they naturally desire to rest from the struggles of contradiction, the fatigue of reasoning, the anxiety of circumspection; when they are hourly tormented with pains and diseases, they are unable to bear any new disturbance, and consider all opposition as an addition to misery, of which they feel already more than they can patiently endure. Thus desirous of peace, and thus fearful of pain, the old man seldom inquires after any other qualities in those whom he caresses, than quickness in conjecturing his desires, activity in supplying his wants, dexterity in intercepting complaints before they approach near enough to disturb him, flexibility to his present humour, submission to hasty petulance, and attention to wearisome narrations. By these arts alone many have been able to defeat the claims of kindred and of merit, and to enrich themselves with presents and legacies.

Thrasybulus inherited a large fortune, and augmented it by the revenues of several lucrative employments, which he discharged with honour and dexterity. He was at last wise enough to consider, that life should not be devoted wholly to accumulation, and, therefore, retiring to his estate, applied himself to the education of his children, and the cultivation of domestick happiness.

He passed several years in this pleasing amusement, and saw his care amply recompensed; his daughters were celebrated for modesty and elegance, and his sons for learning, prudence, and spirit. In time the eagerness with which the neighbouring gentlemen courted his alliance, obliged him to resign his daughters to other families; the vivacity and curiosity of his sons hurried them out of rural privacy into the open world, from whence they had not soon an in-

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clination to return. This, however, he had always hoped; he pleased himself with the success of his schemes, and felt no inconvenience from solitude till an apoplexy deprived him of his wife.

Thrasybulus had now no companion; and the maladies of increasing years having taken from him much of the power of procuring amusement for himself, he thought it necessary to procure some inferiour friend, who might ease him of his economical solicitudes, and divert him by cheerful conversation. All these qualities he soon recollected in Vafer, a clerk in one of the offices over which he had formerly presided. Vafer was invited to visit his old patron, and being by his station acquainted with the present modes of life, and by constant practice dexterous in business, entertained him with so many novelties, and so readily disentangled his affairs, that he was desired to resign his clerkship, and accept a liberal salary in the house of Thrasybulus.

Vafer, having always lived in a state of dependence, was well versed in the arts by which favour is obtained, and could, without repugnance or hesitation, accommodate himself to every caprice, and echo every opinion. He never doubted but to be convinced, nor attempted opposition but to flatter Thrasybulus with the pleasure of a victory. By this practice he found his way into his patron's heart, and, having first made himself agreeable, soon became important. His insidious diligence, by which the laziness of age was gratified, engrossed the management of affairs; and his petty offices of civility, and occasional intercessions, persuaded the tenants to consider him as their friend and benefactor, and to entreat his enforcement of their representations of hard years, and his countenance to petitions for abatement of rent.

Thrasybulus had now banqueted on flattery, till he could no longer bear the harshness of remonstrance or the insipidity of truth. All contrariety to his own opinion shocked him like a violation of some natural right, and all recommendation of his affairs to his own inspection was dreaded

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by him as a summons to torture. His children were alarmed by the sudden riches of Vafer, but their complaints were heard by their father with impatience, as the result of a conspiracy against his quiet, and a design to condemn him, for their own advantage, to groan out his last hours in perplexity and drudgery. The daughters retired with tears in their eyes, but the son continued his importunities till he found his inheritance hazarded by his obstinacy.

Vafer triumphed over all their efforts, and, continuing to confirm himself in authority, at the death of his master, purchased an estate and bade defiance to inquiry and justice.

N°. 163. TUESDAY, OCTOBER 8, 1751.

Mitte superba pati fastidia, spemque caducam
Despice; vive tibi, nam moriere tibi. SENECA.

Bow to no patron's insolence; rely
On no frail hopes, in freedom live and die. F. LEWIS.

NONE of the cruelties exercised by wealth and power upon indigence and dependence is more mischievous in its consequences, or more frequently practised with wanton negligence, than the encouragement of expectations which are never to be gratified, and the elation and depression of the heart by needless vicissitudes of hope and disappointment.

Every man is rich or poor, according to the proportion between his desires and enjoyments; any enlargement of wishes is, therefore, equally destructive to happiness with the diminution of possession; and he that teaches another to long for what he never shall obtain, is no less an enemy to his quiet, than if he had robbed him of part of his patrimony.

But representations thus refined exhibit no adequate idea of the guilt of pretended friendship; of artifices by which followers are attracted only to decorate the retinue of pomp, and swell the shout of popularity, and to be dis-

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missed with contempt and ignominy, when their leader has succeeded or miscarried, when he is sick of show, and weary of noise. While a man, infatuated with the promises of greatness, wastes his hours and days in attendance and solicitation, the honest opportunities of improving his condition pass by without his notice; he neglects to cultivate his own barren soil, because he expects every moment to be placed in regions of spontaneous fertility, and is seldom roused from his delusion, but by the gripe of distress which he cannot resist, and the sense of evils which cannot be remedied.

The punishment of Tantalus in the infernal regions affords a just image of hungry servility, flattered with the approach of advantage, doomed to lose it before it comes into his reach, always within a few days of felicity, and always sinking back to his former wants:

Καὶ μὴν Τάνταλον εἰσεῖδον, χαλέπ' ἄλγε' ἔχοντα,
Ἑσταότ' ἐν λίμνῃ· ἡ δὲ προσέπλαζε γενείῳ·
Στεῦτο δὲ διψάων, πιέειν δ' οὐκ εἶχεν ἐλέσθαι·
Ὁσσάκι γὰρ κύψειε γέρων, πιέειν μενεαίνων,
Τοσσάχ' ὕδωρ ἀπολέσκετ' ἀναβροχέων· ἀμφὶ δὲ ποσσὶ
Γαῖα μέλαινα φάνεσκε, καταζήνασκε δὲ δαίμων.
Δένδρεα δ' ὑψιπέτηλα κατακρήθεν χέε καρπὸν,
Ὄγχναι, καὶ ῥοιαὶ, καὶ μηλέαι ἀγλαόκαρποι,
Συκαῖ τε γλυκερᾶι, καὶ ἐλαῖαι τηλεθόωσαι·
Τῶν ὁπόθ' ἱθύσειε γέρων ἐπὶ χερσὶ μάσασθαι,
Τόσσ' ἄνεμος ῥίπτασκε ποτὶ νέφεα σκιόεντα. Hom. Od. Λ'. 581.

"I saw," says Homer's Ulysses, "the severe punishment of Tantalus. In a lake, whose waters approached to his lips, he stood burning with thirst, without the power to drink. Whenever he inclined his head to the stream, some deity commanded it to be dry, and the dark earth appeared at his feet. Around him lofty trees spread their fruits to view; the pear, the pomegranate, and the apple, the green olive, and the luscious fig, quivered before him, which, whenever he extended his hand to seize them, were snatched by the winds into clouds and obscurity."

This image of misery was, perhaps, originally suggested to some poet by the conduct of his patron, by the daily

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contemplation of splendour which he never must partake, by fruitless attempts to catch at interdicted happiness, and by the sudden evanescence of his reward, when he thought his labours almost at an end. To groan with poverty, when all about him was opulence, riot, and superfluity, and to find the favours which he had long been encouraged to hope, and had long endeavoured to deserve, squandered at last on nameless ignorance, was to thirst with water flowing before him, and to see the fruits, to which his hunger was hastening, scattered by the wind. Nor can my correspondent, whatever he may have suffered, express with more justness or force the vexations of dependence.

TO THE RAMBLER.

SIR,

I am one of those mortals who have been courted and envied as the favourites of the great. Having often gained the prize of composition at the university, I began to hope that I should obtain the same distinction in every other place, and determined to forsake the profession to which I was destined by my parents, and in which the interest of my family would have procured me a very advantageous settlement. The pride of wit fluttered in my heart, and when I prepared to leave the college, nothing entered my imagination but honours, caresses, and rewards, riches without labour, and luxury without expense.

I however delayed my departure for a time, to finish the performance by which I was to draw the first notice of mankind upon me. When it was completed I hurried to London, and considered every moment that passed before its publication, as lost in a kind of neutral existence, and cut off from the golden hours of happiness and fame. The piece was at last printed and disseminated by a rapid sale; I wandered from one place of concourse to another, feasted from morning to night on the repetition of my own praises, and enjoyed the various conjectures of criticks, the mistaken candour of my friends, and the impotent malice of my enemies. Some had read the manuscript, and rec-

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tified its inaccuracies; others had seen it in a state so imperfect, that they could not forbear to wonder at its present excellence; some had conversed with the author at the coffee-house, and others gave hints that they had lent him money.

I knew that no performance is so favourably read as that of a writer who suppresses his name, and therefore resolved to remain concealed, till those by whom literary reputation is established had given their suffrages too publickly to retract them. At length my bookseller informed me that Aurantius, the standing patron of merit, had sent inquiries after me, and invited me to his acquaintance.

The time which I had long expected was now arrived. I went to Aurantius with a beating heart, for I looked upon our interview as the critical moment of my destiny. I was received with civilities which my academick rudeness made me unable to repay; but when I had recovered from my confusion, I prosecuted the conversation with such liveliness and propriety, that I confirmed my new friend in his esteem of my abilities, and was dismissed with the utmost ardour of profession, and raptures of fondness.

I was soon summoned to dine with Aurantius, who had assembled the most judicious of his friends to partake of the entertainment. Again I exerted my powers of sentiment and expression, and again found every eye sparkling with delight, and every tongue silent with attention. I now became familiar at the table of Aurantius, but could never, in his most private or jocund hours, obtain more from him than general declarations of esteem, or endearments of tenderness, which included no particular promise, and therefore conferred no claim. This frigid reserve somewhat disgusted me, and when he complained of three days' absence, I took care to inform him with how much importunity of kindness I had been detained by his rival Pollio.

Aurantius now considered his honour as endangered by the desertion of a wit, and, lest I should have an inclination to wander, told me that I could never find a friend more constant and zealous than himself; that indeed he had made no promises, because he hoped to surprise me with

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advancement, but had been silently promoting my interest, and should continue his good offices, unless he found the kindness of others more desired.

If you, Mr. Rambler, have ever ventured your philosophy within the attraction of greatness, you know the force of such language, introduced with a smile of gracious tenderness, and impressed at the conclusion with an air of solemn sincerity. From that instant I gave myself up wholly to Aurantius, and, as he immediately resumed his former gaiety, expected every morning a summons to some employment of dignity and profit. One month succeeded another, and, in defiance of appearances, I still fancied myself nearer to my wishes, and continued to dream of success, and wake to disappointment. At last the failure of my little fortune compelled me to abate the finery which I hitherto thought necessary to the company with whom I associated, and the rank to which I should be raised. Aurantius, from the moment in which he discovered my poverty, considered me as fully in his power, and afterwards rather permitted my attendance than invited it; thought himself at liberty to refuse my visits, whenever he had other amusements within reach, and often suffered me to wait, without pretending any necessary business. When I was admitted to his table, if any man of rank equal to his own was present, he took occasion to mention my writings, and commend my ingenuity, by which he intended to apologize for the confusion of distinctions, and the improper assortment of his company; and often called upon me to entertain his friends with my productions, as a sportsman delights the squires of his neighbourhood with the curvets of his horse, or the obedience of his spaniels.

To complete my mortification, it was his practice to impose tasks upon me, by requiring me to write upon such subjects as he thought susceptible of ornament and illustration. With these extorted performances he was little satisfied, because he rarely found in them the ideas which

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his own imagination had suggested, and which he therefore thought more natural than mine.

When the pale of ceremony is broken, rudeness and insult soon enter the breach. He now found that he might safely harass me with vexation, that he had fixed the shackles of patronage upon me, and that I could neither resist him nor escape. At last, in the eighth year of my servitude, when the clamour of creditors was vehement, and my necessity known to be extreme, he offered me a small office, but hinted his expectation, that I should marry a young woman with whom he had been acquainted.

I was not so far depressed by my calamities as to comply with this proposal; but, knowing that complaints and expostulations would but gratify his insolence, I turned away with that contempt with which I shall never want spirit to treat the wretch who can outgo the guilt of a robber without the temptation of his profit, and who lures the credulous and thoughtless to maintain the show of his levee, and the mirth of his table, at the expense of honour, happiness, and life.

I am, sir, &c.

LIBERALIS.

N°. 164. SATURDAY, OCTOBER 12, 1751.

———*Vitium, Gaure, Catonis habes.* MART. Lib. ii. Ep. lxxxix. 2.

Gaurus pretends to Cato's fame;
And proves—by Cato's vice, his claim.

DISTINCTION is so pleasing to the pride of man, that a great part of the pain and pleasure of life arises from the gratification or disappointment of an incessant wish for superiority, from the success or miscarriage of secret competitions, from victories and defeats, of which, though they appear to us of great importance, in reality none are conscious except ourselves.

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Proportionate to the prevalence of this love of praise is the variety of means by which its attainment is attempted. Every man, however hopeless his pretensions may appear to all but himself, has some project by which he hopes to rise to reputation; some art by which he imagines that the notice of the world will be attracted; some quality, good or bad, which discriminates him from the common herd of mortals, and by which others may be persuaded to love, or compelled to fear him. The ascents of honour, however steep, never appear inaccessible; he that despairs to scale the precipices by which learning and valour have conducted their favourites, discovers some by-path, or easier acclivity, which, though it cannot bring him to the summit, will yet enable him to overlook those with whom he is now contending for eminence; and we seldom require more to the happiness of the present hour, than to surpass him that stands next before us.

As the greater part of human kind speak and act wholly by imitation, most of those who aspire to honour and applause propose to themselves some example which serves as the model of their conduct, and the limit of their hopes. Almost every man, if closely examined, will be found to have enlisted himself under some leader whom he expects to conduct him to renown; to have some hero or other, living or dead, in his view, whose character he endeavours to assume, and whose performances he labours to equal.

When the original is well chosen, and judiciously copied, the imitator often arrives at excellence, which he could never have attained without direction; for few are formed with abilities to discover new possibilities of excellence, and to distinguish themselves by means never tried before.

But folly and idleness often contrive to gratify pride at a cheaper rate; not the qualities which are most illustrious, but those which are of easiest attainment, are selected for imitation; and the honours and rewards which publick gratitude has paid to the benefactors of mankind, are expected by wretches who can only imitate them in their vices and

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defects, or adopt some petty singularities of which those from whom they are borrowed were secretly ashamed.

No man rises to such a height as to become conspicuous, but he is on one side censured by undiscerning malice, which reproaches him for his best actions, and slanders his apparent and incontestable excellencies; and idolized on the other by ignorant admiration, which exalts his faults and follies into virtues. It may be observed, that he by whose intimacy his acquaintances imagine themselves dignified, generally diffuses among them his mien and his habits; and indeed, without more vigilance than is generally applied to the regulation of the minuter parts of behaviour, it is not easy, when we converse much with one whose general character excites our veneration, to escape all contagion of his peculiarities, even when we do not deliberately think them worthy of our notice, and when they would have excited laughter or disgust, had they not been protected by their alliance to nobler qualities, and accidentally consorted with knowledge or with virtue.

The faults of a man loved or honoured, sometimes steal secretly and imperceptibly upon the wise and virtuous, but, by injudicious fondness or thoughtless vanity, are adopted with design. There is scarce any failing of mind or body, any errour of opinion, or depravity of practice, which instead of producing shame and discontent, its natural effects, has not at one time or other gladdened vanity with the hopes of praise, and been displayed with ostentatious industry by those who sought kindred minds among the wits or heroes, and could prove their relation only by similitude of deformity.

In consequence of this perverse ambition, every habit which reason condemns may be indulged and avowed. When a man is upbraided with his faults, he may indeed be pardoned if he endeavours to run for shelter to some celebrated name; but it is not to be suffered that, from the retreats to which he fled from infamy, he should issue again with the confidence of conquests, and call upon man-

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kind for praise. Yet we see men that waste their patrimony in luxury, destroy their health with debauchery, and enervate their minds with idleness, because there have been some whom luxury never could sink into contempt, nor idleness hinder from the praise of genius.

This general inclination of mankind to copy characters in the gross, and the force which the recommendation of illustrious examples adds to the allurements of vice, ought to be considered by all whose character excludes them from the shades of secrecy, as incitements to scrupulous caution and universal purity of manners. No man, however enslaved to his appetites, or hurried by his passions, can, while he preserves his intellects unimpaired, please himself with promoting the corruption of others. He whose merit has enlarged his influence, would surely wish to exert it for the benefit of mankind. Yet such will be the effect of his reputation, while he suffers himself to indulge in any favourite fault, that they who have no hope to reach his excellence will catch at his failings, and his virtues will be cited to justify the copiers of his vices.

It is particularly the duty of those who consign illustrious names to posterity, to take care lest their readers be misled by ambiguous examples. That writer may be justly condemned as an enemy to goodness, who suffers fondness or interest to confound right with wrong, or to shelter the faults which even the wisest and the best have committed from that ignominy which guilt ought always to suffer, and with which it should be more deeply stigmatized when dignified by its neighbourhood to uncommon worth, since we shall be in danger of beholding it without abhorrence, unless its turpitude be laid open, and the eye secured from the deception of surrounding splendour.

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N°. 165. TUESDAY, OCTOBER 15, 1751.

Ἦν νέος, ἀλλὰ πένης· νῦν γηρῶν, πλούσιος εἰμι·
Ὦ μόνος ἐκ πάντων οἰκτρὸς ἐν ἀμφοτέροις,
Ὃς τότε μὲν χρῆσθαι δυνάμην, ὁπότ' οὐδ' ἐν ἔιχον·
Νῦν δ' ὁπότε χρῆσθαι μὴ δύναμαι, τότ' ἔχω. ANTIPHILUS.

Young was I once and poor, now rich and old;
A harder case than mine was never told;
Blest with the power to use them—I had none;
Loaded with *riches* now, the power is gone. F. LEWIS.

TO THE RAMBLER.

SIR,

THE writers who have undertaken the unpromising task of moderating desire, exert all the power of their eloquence, to show that happiness is not the lot of man, and have, by many arguments and examples, proved the instability of every condition by which envy or ambition is excited. They have set before our eyes all the calamities to which we are exposed from the frailty of nature, the influence of accident, or the stratagems of malice; they have terrified greatness with conspiracies, and riches with anxieties, wit with criticism, and beauty with disease.

All the force of reason, and all the charms of language, are, indeed, necessary to support positions which every man hears with a wish to confute them. Truth finds an easy entrance into the mind when she is introduced by desire, and attended by pleasure; but when she intrudes uncalled, and brings only fear and sorrow in her train, the passes of the intellect are barred against her by prejudice and passion; if she sometimes forces her way by the batteries of argument, she seldom long keeps possession of her conquests, but is ejected by some favoured enemy, or, at best, obtains only a nominal sovereignty, without influence and without authority.

That life is short we are all convinced, and yet suffer not that conviction to repress our projects or limit our expectations; that life is miserable we all feel, and yet we be-

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lieve that the time is near when we shall feel it no longer. But to hope happiness and immortality is equally vain. Our state may, indeed, be more or less imbittered as our duration may be more or less contracted; yet the utmost felicity which we can ever attain will be little better than alleviation of misery, and we shall always feel more pain from our wants than pleasure from our enjoyments. The incident which I am going to relate will show, that to destroy the effect of all our success, it is not necessary that any signal calamity should fall upon us, that we should be harassed by implacable persecution, or excruciated by irremediable pains: the brightest hours of prosperity have their clouds, and the stream of life, if it is not ruffled by obstructions, will grow putrid by stagnation.

My father, resolving not to imitate the folly of his ancestors, who had hitherto left the younger sons encumbrances on the eldest, destined me to a lucrative profession; and I, being careful to lose no opportunity of improvement, was, at the usual time in which young men enter the world, well qualified for the exercise of the business which I had chosen.

My eagerness to distinguish myself in publick, and my impatience of the narrow scheme of life to which my indigence confined me, did not suffer me to continue long in the town where I was born. I went away as from a place of confinement, with a resolution to return no more, till I should be able to dazzle with my splendour those who now looked upon me with contempt, to reward those who had paid honours to my dawning merit, and to show all who had suffered me to glide by them unknown and neglected, how much they mistook their interest in omitting to propitiate a genius like mine.

Such were my intentions when I sallied forth into the unknown world, in quest of riches and honours, which I expected to procure in a very short time; for what could withhold them from industry and knowledge? He that indulges hope will always be disappointed. Reputation I very soon obtained; but as merit is much more cheaply

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acknowledged than rewarded, I did not find myself yet enriched in proportion to my celebrity.

I had, however, in time, surmounted the obstacles by which envy and competition obstruct the first attempts of a new claimant, and saw my opponents and censurers tacitly confessing their despair of success, by courting my friendship and yielding to my influence. They who once pursued me, were now satisfied to escape from me; and they who had before thought me presumptuous in hoping to overtake them, had now their utmost wish, if they were permitted, at no great distance, quietly to follow me.

My wants were not madly multiplied as my acquisitions increased, and the time came, at length, when I thought myself enabled to gratify all reasonable desires, and when, therefore, I resolved to enjoy that plenty and serenity which I had been hitherto labouring to procure, to enjoy them while I was yet neither crushed by age into infirmity, nor so habituated to a particular manner of life as to be unqualified for new studies or entertainments.

I now quitted my profession, and, to set myself at once free from all importunities to resume it, changed my residence, and devoted the remaining part of my time to quiet and amusement. Amidst innumerable projects of pleasure, which restless idleness incited me to form, and of which most, when they came to the moment of execution, were rejected for others of no longer continuance, some accident revived in my imagination the pleasing ideas of my native place. It was now in my power to visit those from whom I had been so long absent, in such a manner as was consistent with my former resolution, and I wondered how it could happen that I had so long delayed my own happiness.

Full of the admiration which I should excite, and the homage which I should receive, I dressed my servants in a more ostentatious livery, purchased a magnificent chariot, and resolved to dazzle the inhabitants of the little town with an unexpected blaze of greatness.

While the preparations that vanity required were made

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for my departure, which, as workmen will not easily be hurried beyond their ordinary rate, I thought very tedious, I solaced my impatience with imaging the various censures that my appearance would produce; the hopes which some would feel from my bounty; the terrour which my power would strike on others; the awkward respect with which I should be accosted by timorous officiousness; and the distant reverence with which others, less familiar to splendour and dignity, would be contented to gaze upon me. I deliberated a long time, whether I should immediately descend to a level with my former acquaintances; or make my condescension more grateful by a gentle transition from haughtiness and reserve. At length I determined to forget some of my companions, till they discovered themselves by some indubitable token, and to receive the congratulations of others upon my good fortune with indifference, to show that I always expected what I had now obtained. The acclamations of the populace I purposed to reward with six hogsheads of ale, and a roasted ox, and then recommend to them to return to their work.

At last all the trappings of grandeur were fitted, and I began the journey of triumph, which I could have wished to have ended in the same moment; but my horses felt none of their master's ardour, and I was shaken four days upon rugged roads. I then entered the town, and, having graciously let fall the glasses, that my person might be seen, passed slowly through the street. The noise of the wheels brought the inhabitants to their doors, but I could not perceive that I was known by them. At last I alighted, and my name, I suppose, was told by my servants, for the barber stepped from the opposite house, and seized me by the hand with honest joy in his countenance, which, according to the rule that I had prescribed to myself, I repressed with a frigid graciousness. The fellow, instead of sinking into dejection, turned away with contempt, and left me to consider how the second salutation should be received. The next friend was better treated, for I soon found that

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I must purchase by civility that regard which I had expected to enforce by insolence.

There was yet no smoke of bonfires, no harmony of bells, no shout of crowds, nor riot of joy; the business of the day went forward as before; and, after having ordered a splendid supper, which no man came to partake, and which my chagrin hindered me from tasting, I went to bed, where the vexation of disappointment overpowered the fatigue of my journey, and kept me from sleep.

I rose so much humbled by those mortifications, as to inquire after the present state of the town, and found that I had been absent too long to obtain the triumph which had flattered my expectation. Of the friends whose compliments I expected, some had long ago moved to distant provinces, some had lost, in the maladies of age, all sense of another's prosperity, and some had forgotten our former intimacy amidst care and distresses. Of three whom I had resolved to punish for their former offences by a longer continuance of neglect, one was, by his own industry, raised above my scorn, and two were sheltered from it in the grave. All those whom I loved, feared, or hated, all whose envy or whose kindness I had hopes of contemplating with pleasure, were swept away, and their place was filled by a new generation with other views and other competitions; and among many proofs of the impotence of wealth, I found that it conferred upon me very few distinctions in my native place.

I am, sir, &c.

SEROTINUS.

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N°. 166. SATURDAY, OCTOBER 19, 1751.

Semper eris pauper, si pauper es, Æmiliane:
Dantur opes nulli nunc nisi divitibus. MART. Lib. v. Ep. lxxxi.

Once poor, my friend, still poor you must remain,
The rich alone have all the means of gain. EDW. CAVE.

No complaint has been more frequently repeated in all ages than that of the neglect of merit associated with poverty, and the difficulty with which valuable or pleasing qualities force themselves into view, when they are obscured by indigence. It has been long observed, that native beauty has little power to charm without the ornaments which fortune bestows, and that to want the favour of others is often sufficient to hinder us from obtaining it.

Every day discovers that mankind are not yet convinced of their errour, or that their conviction is without power to influence their conduct; for poverty still continues to produce contempt, and still obstructs the claims of kindred and of virtue. The eye of wealth is elevated towards higher stations, and seldom descends to examine the actions of those who are placed below the level of its notice, and who, in distant regions and lower situations, are struggling with distress, or toiling for bread. Among the multitudes overwhelmed with insuperable calamity, it is common to find those whom a very little assistance would enable to support themselves with decency, and who yet cannot obtain from near relations, what they see hourly lavished in ostentation, luxury, or frolick.

There are natural reasons why poverty does not easily conciliate affection. He that has been confined from his infancy to the conversation of the lowest classes of mankind, must necessarily want those accomplishments which are the usual means of attracting favour; and though truth, fortitude, and probity, give an indisputable right to reverence and kindness, they will not be distinguished by common eyes, unless they are brightened by elegance of manners, but are cast aside like unpolished gems, of which

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none but the artist knows the intrinsick value, till their asperities are smoothed, and their incrustations rubbed away.

The grossness of vulgar habits obstructs the efficacy of virtue, as impurity and harshness of style impair the force of reason, and rugged numbers turn off the mind from artifice of disposition, and fertility of invention. Few have strength of reason to overrule the perceptions of sense; and yet fewer have curiosity or benevolence to struggle long against the first impression; he therefore who fails to please in his salutation and address, is at once rejected, and never obtains an opportunity of showing his latent excellencies, or essential qualities.

It is, indeed, not easy to prescribe a successful manner of approach to the distressed or necessitous, whose condition subjects every kind of behaviour equally to miscarriage. He whose confidence of merit incites him to meet, without any apparent sense of inferiority, the eyes of those who flattered themselves with their own dignity, is considered as an insolent leveller, impatient of the just prerogatives of rank and wealth, eager to usurp the station to which he has no right, and to confound the subordinations of society; and who would contribute to the exaltation of that spirit which even want and calamity are not able to restrain from rudeness and rebellion?

But no better success will commonly be found to attend servility and dejection, which often give pride the confidence to treat them with contempt. A request made with diffidence and timidity is easily denied, because the petitioner himself seems to doubt its fitness.

Kindness is generally reciprocal; we are desirous of pleasing others, because we receive pleasure from them; but by what means can the man please, whose attention is engrossed by his distresses, and who has no leisure to be officious; whose will is restrained by his necessities, and who has no power to confer benefits; whose temper is perhaps vitiated by misery, and whose understanding is impeded by ignorance?

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It is yet a more offensive discouragement, that the same actions performed by different hands produce different effects, and, instead of rating the man by his performances, we rate too frequently the performance by the man. It sometimes happens in the combinations of life, that important services are performed by inferiours; but though their zeal and activity may be paid by pecuniary rewards, they seldom excite that flow of gratitude, or obtain that accumulation of recompense, with which all think it their duty to acknowledge the favour of those who descend to their assistance from a higher elevation. To be obliged, is to be in some respect inferiour to another[h]; and few willingly indulge the memory of an action which raises one whom they have always been accustomed to think below them, but satisfy themselves with faint praise and penurious payment, and then drive it from their own minds, and endeavour to conceal it from the knowledge of others.

It may be always objected to the services of those who can be supposed to want a reward, that they were produced not by kindness but interest; they are, therefore, when they are no longer wanted, easily disregarded as arts of insinuation, or stratagems of selfishness. Benefits which are received as gifts from wealth, are exacted as debts from indigence; and he that in a high station is celebrated for superfluous goodness, would in a meaner condition have barely been confessed to have done his duty.

It is scarcely possible for the utmost benevolence to oblige, when exerted under the disadvantages of great inferiority; for, by the habitual arrogance of wealth, such expectations are commonly formed as no zeal or industry can satisfy; and what regard can he hope, who has done less than was demanded from him?

There are, indeed, kindnesses conferred which were never purchased by precedent favours, and there is an affec-

[h] Sir Joshua Reynolds evinced great reach of mind and intimate acquaintance with humanity, when he observed, on overhearing a person condoling with some ladies on the death of one who had conferred the greatest favours upon them, that at all events they were relieved from the *burden* of gratitude.

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tion not arising from gratitude or gross interest, by which similar natures are attracted to each other, without prospect of any other advantage than the pleasure of exchanging sentiments, and the hope of confirming their esteem of themselves by the approbation of each other. But this spontaneous fondness seldom rises at the sight of poverty, which every one regards with habitual contempt, and of which the applause is no more courted by vanity, than the countenance is solicited by ambition. The most generous and disinterested friendship must be resolved at last into the love of ourselves; he, therefore, whose reputation or dignity inclines us to consider his esteem as a testimonial of desert, will always find our hearts open to his endearments. We every day see men of eminence followed with all the obsequiousness of dependence, and courted with all the blandishments of flattery, by those who want nothing from them but professions of regard, and who think themselves liberally rewarded by a bow, a smile, or an embrace.

But those prejudices which every mind feels, more or less, in favour of riches, ought, like other opinions, which only custom and example have impressed upon us, to be in time subjected to reason. We must learn how to separate the real character from extraneous adhesions and casual circumstances, to consider closely him whom we are about to adopt or to reject; to regard his inclinations as well as his actions; to trace out those virtues which lie torpid in the heart for want of opportunity, and those vices that lurk unseen by the absence of temptation; that when we find worth faintly shooting in the shades of obscurity, we may let in light and sunshine upon it, and ripen barren volition into efficacy and power.

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N°. 167. TUESDAY, OCTOBER 22, 1751.

Candida perpetuo reside, Concordia, lecto,
Tumque pari semper sit Venus æqua jugo.
Diligat illa senem quondam: sed et ipsa marito,
Tunc quoque cum fuerit, non videatur, anus. MART. Lib. iv. xiii. 7.

Their nuptial bed may smiling concord dress,
And Venus still the happy union bless!
Wrinkled with age, may mutual love and truth
To their dim eyes recall the bloom of youth. F. LEWIS.

TO THE RAMBLER.

SIR,

IT is not common to envy those with whom we cannot easily be placed in comparison. Every man sees without malevolence the progress of another in the tracks of life, which he has himself no desire to tread, and hears, without inclination to cavils or contradiction, the renown of those whose distance will not suffer them to draw the attention of mankind from his own merit. The sailor never thinks it necessary to contest the lawyer's abilities; nor would the Rambler, however jealous of his reputation, be much disturbed by the success of rival wits at Agra or Ispahan.

We do not therefore ascribe to you any superlative degree of virtue, when we believe that we may inform you of our change of condition without danger of malignant fascination; and that when you read of the marriage of your correspondents, Hymenæus and Tranquilla, you will join your wishes to those of their other friends for the happy event of an union in which caprice and selfishness had so little part.

There is, at least, this reason why we should be less deceived in our connubial hopes than many who enter into the same state; that we have allowed our minds to form no unreasonable expectations, nor vitiated our fancies in the soft hours of courtship, with visions of felicity which human power cannot bestow, or of perfection which human virtue

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cannot attain. That impartiality with which we endeavour to inspect the manners of all whom we have known was never so much overpowered by our passion, but that we discovered some faults and weaknesses in each other; and joined our hands in conviction, that as there are advantages to be enjoyed in marriage, there are inconveniencies likewise to be endured; and that, together with confederate intellects and auxiliar virtues, we must find different opinions and opposite inclinations.

We, however, flatter ourselves, (for who is not flattered by himself as well as by others on the day of marriage?) that we are eminently qualified to give mutual pleasure. Our birth is without any such remarkable disparity as can give either an opportunity of insulting the other with pompous names and splendid alliances, or of calling in, upon any domestick controversy, the overbearing assistance of powerful relations. Our fortune was equally suitable, so that we meet without any of those obligations, which always produce reproach or suspicion of reproach, which, though they may be forgotten in the gaieties of the first month, no delicacy will always suppress, or of which the suppression must be considered as a new favour, to be repaid by tameness and submission, till gratitude takes the place of love, and the desire of pleasing degenerates by degrees into the fear of offending.

The settlements caused no delay; for we did not trust our affairs to the negotiation of wretches, who would have paid their court by multiplying stipulations. Tranquilla scorned to detain any part of her fortune from him into whose hands she delivered up her person; and Hymenæus thought no act of baseness more criminal than his who enslaves his wife by her own generosity, who, by marrying without a jointure, condemns her to all the dangers of accident and caprice, and at last boasts his liberality, by granting what only the indiscretion of her kindness enabled him to withhold. He therefore received, on the common terms, the portion which any other woman might have brought him, and reserved all the exuberance of acknow-

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ledgment for those excellencies which he has yet been able to discover only in Tranquilla.

We did not pass the weeks of courtship like those who consider themselves as taking the last draught of pleasure, and resolve not to quit the bowl without a surfeit, or who know themselves about to set happiness to hazard, and endeavour to lose their sense of danger in the ebriety of perpetual amusement, and whirl round the gulf before they sink. Hymeneus often repeated a medical axiom, that *the succours of sickness ought not to be wasted in health.* We know that however our eyes may yet sparkle, and our hearts bound at the presence of each other, the time of listlessness and satiety, of peevishness and discontent, must come at last, in which we shall be driven for relief to shows and recreations; that the uniformity of life must be sometimes diversified, and the vacuities of conversation sometimes supplied. We rejoice in the reflection that we have stores of novelty yet unexhausted, which may be opened when repletion shall call for change, and gratifications yet untasted, by which life, when it shall become vapid or bitter, may be restored to its former sweetness and sprightliness, and again irritate the appetite, and again sparkle in the cup.

Our time will probably be less tasteless than that of those whom the authority and avarice of parents unite, almost without their consent, in their early years, before they have accumulated any fund of reflection, or collected materials for mutual entertainment. Such we have often seen rising in the morning to cards, and retiring in the afternoon to doze, whose happiness was celebrated by their neighbours, because they happened to grow rich by parsimony, and to be kept quiet by insensibility, and agreed to eat and to sleep together.

We have both mingled with the world, and are, therefore, no strangers to the faults and virtues, the designs and competitions, the hopes and fears of our contemporaries. We have both amused our leisure with books, and can, therefore, recount the events of former times, or cite the

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dictates of ancient wisdom. Every occurrence furnishes us with some hint which one or the other can improve, and if it should happen that memory or imagination fail us, we can retire to no idle or unimproving solitude.

Though our characters, beheld at a distance, exhibit this general resemblance, yet a nearer inspection discovers such a dissimilitude of our habitudes and sentiments, as leaves each some peculiar advantages, and affords that *concordia discors*, that suitable disagreement, which is always necessary to intellectual harmony. There may be a total diversity of ideas which admits no participation of the same delight, and there may likewise be such a conformity of notions as leaves neither any thing to add to the decisions of the other. With such contrariety there can be no peace, with such similarity there can be no pleasure. Our reasonings, though often formed upon different views, terminate generally in the same conclusion. Our thoughts, like rivulets issuing from distant springs, are each impregnated in its course with various mixtures, and tinged by infusions unknown to the other, yet, at last, easily unite into one stream, and purify themselves by the gentle effervescence of contrary qualities.

These benefits we receive in a greater degree as we converse without reserve, because we have nothing to conceal. We have no debts to be paid by imperceptible deductions from avowed expenses, no habits to be indulged by the private subserviency of a favoured servant, no private interviews with needy relations, no intelligence with spies placed upon each other. We considered marriage as the most solemn league of perpetual friendship, a state from which artifice and concealment are to be banished for ever, and in which every act of dissimulation is a breach of faith.

The impetuous vivacity of youth, and that ardour of desire which the first sight of pleasure naturally produces, have long ceased to hurry us into irregularity and vehemence; and experience has shown us that few gratifications are too valuable to be sacrificed to complaisance.

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We have thought it convenient to rest from the fatigue of pleasure, and now only continue that course of life into which we had before entered, confirmed in our choice by mutual approbation, supported in our resolution by mutual encouragement, and assisted in our efforts by mutual exhortation.

Such, Mr. Rambler, is our prospect of life, a prospect which, as it is beheld with more attention, seems to open more extensive happiness, and spreads, by degrees, into the boundless regions of eternity. But if all our prudence has been vain, and we are doomed to give one instance more of the uncertainty of human discernment, we shall comfort ourselves amidst our disappointments, that we were not betrayed but by such delusions as caution could not escape, since we sought happiness only in the arms of virtue.

We are, sir,

Your humble servants,

HYMENÆUS.

TRANQUILLA.

N°. 168. SATURDAY, OCTOBER 26, 1751.

——————Decipit
Frons prima multos: rara mens intelligit,
Quod interiore condidit cura angulo. PHÆDRUS, Lib. iv. Fab. i. 5.

The tinsel glitter, and the specious mien,
Delude the most; few pry behind the scene.

IT has been observed by Boileau, that "a mean or common thought expressed in pompous diction, generally pleases more than a new or noble sentiment delivered in low and vulgar language; because the number is greater of those whom custom has enabled to judge of words, than whom study has qualified to examine things."

This solution might satisfy, if such only were offended with meanness of expression as are unable to distinguish propriety of thought, and to separate propositions or images

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from the vehicles by which they are conveyed to the understanding. But this kind of disgust is by no means confined to the ignorant or superficial; it operates uniformly and universally upon readers of all classes; every man, however profound or abstracted, perceives himself irresistibly alienated by low terms; they who profess the most zealous adherence to truth are forced to admit that she owes part of her charms to her ornaments; and loses much of her power over the soul, when she appears disgraced by a dress uncouth or ill adjusted.

We are all offended by low terms, but are not disgusted alike by the same compositions, because we do not all agree to censure the same terms as low. No word is naturally or intrinsically meaner than another; our opinion therefore of words, as of other things arbitrarily and capriciously established, depends wholly upon accident and custom. The cottager thinks those apartments splendid and spacious, which an inhabitant of palaces will despise for their inelegance; and to him who has passed most of his hours with the delicate and polite, many expressions will seem sordid, which another, equally acute, may hear without offence; but a mean term never fails to displease him to whom it appears mean, as poverty is certainly and invariably despised, though he who is poor in the eyes of some, may, by others, be envied for his wealth.

Words become low by the occasions to which they are applied, or the general character of them who use them; and the disgust which they produce, arises from the revival of those images with which they are commonly united. Thus if, in the most solemn discourse, a phrase happens to occur which has been successfully employed in some ludicrous narrative, the gravest auditor finds it difficult to refrain from laughter, when they who are not prepossessed by the same accidental association, are utterly unable to guess the reason of his merriment. Words which convey ideas of dignity in one age, are banished from elegant writing or conversation in another, because they are in time debased by vulgar mouths, and

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can be no longer heard without the involuntary recollection of unpleasing images.

When Macbeth is confirming himself in the horrid purpose of stabbing his king, he breaks out amidst his emotions into a wish natural to a murderer:

> ——Come, thick night!
> And pall thee in the dunnest smoke of hell,
> That my keen knife see not the wound it makes;
> Nor heav'n peep through the blanket of the dark,
> To cry, Hold! hold!——

In this passage is exerted all the force of poetry; that force which calls new powers into being, which embodies sentiment, and animates matter: yet, perhaps, scarce any man now peruses it without some disturbance of his attention from the counteraction of the words to the ideas. What can be more dreadful than to implore the presence of night, invested, not in common obscurity, but in the smoke of hell? Yet the efficacy of this innovation is destroyed by the insertion of an epithet now seldom heard but in the stable, and *dun* night may come or go without any other notice than contempt.

If we start into raptures when some hero of the Iliad tells us that δόρυ μαίνεται, his lance rages with eagerness to destroy; if we are alarmed at the terrour of the soldiers commanded by Cæsar to hew down the sacred grove, who dreaded, says Lucan, lest the axe aimed at the oak should fly back upon the striker:

> ——*Si robora sacra ferirent,*
> *In sua credebant redituras membra secures;*
>
> None dares with impious steel the grove to rend,
> Lest on himself the destin'd stroke descend;

we cannot surely but sympathize with the horrours of a wretch about to murder his master, his friend, his benefactor, who suspects that the weapon will refuse its office, and start back from the breast which he is preparing to violate. Yet this sentiment is weakened by the name of an instrument used by butchers and cooks in the meanest employments: we do not immediately conceive that any

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crime of importance is to be committed with a *knife;* or who does not, at last, from the long habit of connecting a knife with sordid offices, feel aversion rather than terrour.

Macbeth proceeds to wish, in the madness of guilt, that the inspection of heaven may be intercepted, and that he may, in the involutions of infernal darkness, escape the eye of providence. This is the utmost extravagance of determined wickedness; yet this is so debased by two unfortunate words, that while I endeavour to impress on my reader the energy of the sentiment, I can scarce check my risibility, when the expression forces itself upon my mind; for who, without some relaxation of his gravity, can hear of the avengers of guilt *peeping through a blanket?*

These imperfections of diction are less obvious to the reader, as he is less acquainted with common usages; they are, therefore, wholly imperceptible to a foreigner, who learns our language from books, and will strike a solitary academick less forcibly than a modish lady.

Among the numerous requisites that must concur to complete an author, few are of more importance than an early entrance into the living world. The seeds of knowledge may be planted in solitude, but must be cultivated in publick. Argumentation may be taught in colleges, and theories formed in retirement; but the artifice of embellishment, and the powers of attraction, can be gained only by general converse.

An acquaintance with prevailing customs and fashionable elegance is necessary, likewise, for other purposes. The injury that grand imagery suffers from unsuitable language, personal merit may fear from rudeness and indelicacy. When the success of Æneas depended on the favour of the queen upon whose coasts he was driven, his celestial protectress thought him not sufficiently secured against rejection by his piety or bravery, but decorated him for the interview with preternatural beauty. Whoever desires, for his writings or himself, what none can reasonably contemn, the favour of mankind, must add

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grace to strength, and make his thoughts agreeable as well as useful. Many complain of neglect who never tried to attract regard. It cannot be expected that the patrons of science or virtue should be solicitous to discover excellencies, which they who possess them shade and disguise. Few have abilities so much needed by the rest of the world as to be caressed on their own terms; and he that will not condescend to recommend himself by external embellishments, must submit to the fate of just sentiment meanly expressed, and be ridiculed and forgotten before he is understood.

N°. 169. TUESDAY, OCTOBER 29, 1751.

Nec pluteum cædit, nec demorsos sapit ungues. PER. Sat. i. 106.

No blood from bitten nails those poems drew;
But churn'd, like spittle, from the lips they flew. DRYDEN.

NATURAL historians assert, that whatever is formed for long duration arrives slowly to its maturity. Thus the firmest timber is of tardy growth, and animals generally exceed each other in longevity, in proportion to the time between their conception and their birth.

The same observation may be extended to the offspring of the mind. Hasty compositions, however they please at first by flowery luxuriance, and spread in the sunshine of temporary favour, can seldom endure the change of seasons, but perish at the first blast of criticism, or frost of neglect. When Apelles was reproached with the paucity of his productions, and the incessant attention with which he retouched his pieces, he condescended to make no other answer than that *he painted for perpetuity*.

No vanity can more justly incur contempt and indignation than that which boasts of negligence and hurry. For who can bear with patience the writer who claims such superiority to the rest of his species, as to imagine

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that mankind are at leisure for attention to his extemporary sallies, and that posterity will reposite his casual effusions among the treasures of ancient wisdom?

Men have sometimes appeared of such transcendent abilities, that their slightest and most cursory performances excel all that labour and study can enable meaner intellects to compose; as there are regions of which the spontaneous products cannot be equalled in other soils by care and culture. But it is no less dangerous for any man to place himself in this rank of understanding, and fancy that he is born to be illustrious without labour, than to omit the cares of husbandry, and expect from his ground the blossoms of Arabia.

The greatest part of those who congratulate themselves upon their intellectual dignity, and usurp the privileges of genius, are men whom only themselves would ever have marked out as enriched by uncommon liberalities of nature, or entitled to veneration and immortality on easy terms. This ardour of confidence is usually found among those who, having not enlarged their notions by books or conversation, are persuaded, by the partiality which we all feel in our own favour, that they have reached the summit of excellence, because they discover none higher than themselves; and who acquiesce in the first thoughts that occur, because their scantiness of knowledge allows them little choice; and the narrowness of their views affords them no glimpse of perfection, of that sublime idea which human industry has from the first ages been vainly toiling to approach. They see a little, and believe that there is nothing beyond their sphere of vision, as the Patuecos of Spain, who inhabited a small valley, conceived the surrounding mountains to be the boundaries of the world. In proportion as perfection is more distinctly conceived, the pleasure of contemplating our own performances will be lessened; it may, therefore, be observed, that they who most deserve praise are often afraid to decide in favour of their own performances; they know how much is still wanting to their completion, and wait with anxiety and

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terrour the determination of the publick. *I please every one else*, says Tully, *but never satisfy myself.*

It has often been inquired, why, notwithstanding the advances of later ages in science, and the assistance which the infusion of so many new ideas has given us, we fall below the ancients in the art of composition. Some part of their superiority may be justly ascribed to the graces of their language, from which the most polished of the present European tongues are nothing more than barbarous degenerations. Some advantage they might gain merely by priority, which put them in possession of the most natural sentiments, and left us nothing but servile repetition or forced conceits. But the greater part of their praise seems to have been the just reward of modesty and labour. Their sense of human weakness confined them commonly to one study, which their knowledge of the extent of every science engaged them to prosecute with indefatigable diligence.

Among the writers of antiquity I remember none, except Statius, who ventures to mention the speedy production of his writings, either as an extenuation of his faults, or a proof of his facility. Nor did Statius, when he considered himself as a candidate for lasting reputation, think a closer attention unnecessary, but amidst all his pride and indigence, the two great hasteners of modern poems, employed twelve years upon the Thebaid, and thinks his claim to renown proportionate to his labour:

> *Thebais, multa cruciata lima,*
> *Tentat, audaci fide, Mantuanæ*
> *Gaudia famæ.*
>
> Polish'd with endless toil, my lays
> At length aspire to Mantuan praise.

Ovid indeed apologizes in his banishment for the imperfection of his letters, but mentions his want of leisure to polish them as an addition to his calamities; and was so far from imagining revisals and corrections unnecessary, that at his departure from Rome, he threw his Metamor-

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phoses into the fire, lest he should be disgraced by a book which he could not hope to finish.

It seems not often to have happened that the same writer aspired to reputation in verse and prose; and of those few that attempted such diversity of excellence, I know not that even one succeeded. Contrary characters they never imagined a single mind able to support, and therefore no man is recorded to have undertaken more than one kind of dramatick poetry.

What they had written, they did not venture in their first fondness to thrust into the world, but, considering the impropriety of sending forth inconsiderately that which cannot be recalled, deferred the publication, if not nine years, according to the direction of Horace, yet till their fancy was cooled after the raptures of invention, and the glare of novelty had ceased to dazzle the judgment.

There were in those days no weekly or diurnal writers; *multa dies et multa litura*, much time, and many rasures, were considered as indispensable requisites; and that no other method of attaining lasting praise has been yet discovered, may be conjectured from the blotted manuscripts of Milton now remaining, and from the tardy emission of Pope's compositions, delayed more than once till the incidents to which they alluded were forgotten, till his enemies were secure from his satire, and, what to an honest mind must be more painful, his friends were deaf to his encomiums.

To him, whose eagerness of praise hurries his productions soon into the light, many imperfections are unavoidable, even where the mind furnishes the materials, as well as regulates their disposition, and nothing depends upon search or information. Delay opens new veins of thought, the subject dismissed for a time appears with a new train of dependent images, the accidents of reading or conversation supply new ornaments or allusions, or mere intermission of the fatigue of thinking enables the mind to collect new force, and make new excursions. But all

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those benefits come too late for him, who, when he was weary with labour, snatched at the recompense, and gave his work to his friends and his enemies, as soon as impatience and pride persuaded him to conclude it.

One of the most pernicious effects of haste, is obscurity. He that teems with a quick succession of ideas, and perceives how one sentiment produces another, easily believes that he can clearly express what he so strongly comprehends; he seldom suspects his thoughts of embarrassment, while he preserves in his own memory the series of connexion, or his diction of ambiguity, while only one sense is present to his mind. Yet if he has been employed on an abstruse, or complicated argument, he will find, when he has awhile withdrawn his mind, and returns as a new reader to his work, that he has only a conjectural glimpse of his own meaning, and that to explain it to those whom he desires to instruct, he must open his sentiments, disentangle his method, and alter his arrangement.

Authors and lovers always suffer some infatuation, from which only absence can set them free; and every man ought to restore himself to the full exercise of his judgment, before he does that which he cannot do improperly, without injuring his honour and his quiet.

N°. 170. SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 2, 1751.

Confiteor; si quid prodest delicta fateri. OVID. Am. Lib. ii. El. iv. 3.

I grant the charge; forgive the fault confess'd.

TO THE RAMBLER.

SIR,

I AM one of those beings from whom many, that melt at the sight of all other misery, think it meritorious to withhold relief; one whom the rigour of virtuous indignation dooms to suffer without complaint, and perish without regard; and whom I myself have formerly insulted in the pride of reputation and security of innocence.

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I am of a good family, but my father was burthened with more children than he could decently support. A wealthy relation, as he travelled from London to his country seat, condescending to make him a visit, was touched with compassion of his narrow fortune, and resolved to ease him of part of his charge, by taking the care of a child upon himself. Distress on one side, and ambition on the other, were too powerful for parental fondness, and the little family passed in review before him, that he might make his choice. I was then ten years old, and, without knowing for what purpose, I was called to my great cousin, endeavoured to recommend myself by my best courtesy, sung him my prettiest song, told the last story that I had read, and so much endeared myself by my innocence, that he declared his resolution to adopt me, and to educate me with his own daughters.

My parents felt the common struggles at the thought of parting, and *some natural tears they dropp'd, but wip'd them soon.* They considered, not without that false estimation of the value of wealth, which poverty, long continued, always produces, that I was raised to higher rank than they could give me, and to hopes of more ample fortune than they could bequeath. My mother sold some of her ornaments to dress me in such a manner as might secure me from contempt at my first arrival; and when she dismissed me, pressed me to her bosom with an embrace that I still feel, gave me some precepts of piety, which, however neglected, I have not forgotten, and uttered prayers for my final happiness, of which I have not yet ceased to hope that they will at last be granted.

My sisters envied my new finery, and seemed not much to regret our separation; my father conducted me to the stagecoach with a kind of cheerful tenderness; and in a very short time I was transported to splendid apartments, and a luxurious table, and grew familiar to show, noise, and gaiety.

In three years my mother died, having implored a blessing on her family with her last breath. I had little

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opportunity to indulge a sorrow which there was none to partake with me, and, therefore, soon ceased to reflect much upon my loss. My father turned all his care upon his other children, whom some fortunate adventures and unexpected legacies enabled him, when he died, four years after my mother, to leave in a condition above their expectations.

I should have shared the increase of his fortune, and had once a portion assigned me in his will; but my cousin assuring him that all care for me was needless, since he had resolved to place me happily in the world, directed him to divide my part amongst my sisters.

Thus I was thrown upon dependence without resource. Being now at an age in which young women are initiated into company, I was no longer to be supported in my former character, but at considerable expense; so that partly lest I should waste money, and partly lest my appearance might draw too many compliments and assiduities, I was insensibly degraded from my equality, and enjoyed few privileges above the head servant, but that of receiving no wages.

I felt every indignity, but knew that resentment would precipitate my fall. I therefore endeavoured to continue my importance by little services and active officiousness, and, for a time, preserved myself from neglect, by withdrawing all pretences to competition, and studying to please rather than to shine. But my interest, notwithstanding this expedient, hourly declined, and my cousin's favourite maid began to exchange repartees with me, and consult me about the alterations of a cast gown.

I was now completely depressed; and, though I had seen mankind enough to know the necessity of outward cheerfulness, I often withdrew to my chamber to vent my grief, or turn my condition in my mind, and examine by what means I might escape from perpetual mortification. At last my schemes and sorrows were interrupted by a sudden change of my relation's behaviour, who one day took an occasion, when we were left together in a room, to

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bid me suffer myself no longer to be insulted, but assume the place which he always intended me to hold in the family: He assured me that his wife's preference of her own daughters should never hurt me; and, accompanying his professions with a purse of gold, ordered me to bespeak a rich suit at the mercer's, and to apply privately to him for money when I wanted it, and insinuate that my other friends supplied me, which he would take care to confirm.

By this stratagem, which I did not then understand, he filled me with tenderness and gratitude, compelled me to repose on him as my only support, and produced a necessity of private conversation. He often appointed interviews at the house of an acquaintance, and sometimes called on me with a coach, and carried me abroad. My sense of his favour, and the desire of retaining it, disposed me to unlimited complaisance, and, though I saw his kindness grow every day more fond, I did not suffer any suspicion to enter my thoughts. At last the wretch took advantage of the familiarity which he enjoyed as my relation, and the submission which he exacted as my benefactor, to complete the ruin of an orphan, whom his own promises had made indigent, whom his indulgence had melted, and his authority subdued.

I know not why it should afford subject of exultation to overpower, on any terms, the resolution, or surprise the caution of a girl; but of all the boasters that deck themselves in the spoils of innocence and beauty, they surely have the least pretensions to triumph, who submit to owe their success to some casual influence. They neither employ the graces of fancy, nor the force of understanding, in their attempts; they cannot please their vanity with the art of their approaches, the delicacy of their adulations, the elegance of their address, or the efficacy of their eloquence; nor applaud themselves as possessed of any qualities, by which affection is attracted. They surmount no obstacles, they defeat no rivals, but attack only those who cannot resist, and are often content to possess the body without any solicitude to gain the heart.

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Many of those despicable wretches does my present acquaintance with infamy and wickedness enable me to number among the heroes of debauchery. Reptiles whom their own servants would have despised, had they not been their servants, and with whom beggary would have disdained intercourse, had she not been allured by hopes of relief. Many of the beings which are now rioting in taverns, or shivering in the streets, have been corrupted, not by arts of gallantry, which stole gradually upon the affections and laid prudence asleep, but by the fear of losing benefits which were never intended, or of incurring resentment which they could not escape; some have been frighted by masters, and some awed by guardians into ruin.

Our crime had its usual consequence, and he soon perceived that I could not long continue in his family. I was distracted at the thought of the reproach which I now believed inevitable. He comforted me with hopes of eluding all discovery, and often upbraided me with the anxiety, which perhaps none but himself saw in my countenance; but at last mingled his assurances of protection and maintenance with menaces of total desertion, if, in the moments of perturbation, I should suffer his secret to escape, or endeavour to throw on him any part of my infamy.

Thus passed the dismal hours, till my retreat could no longer be delayed. It was pretended that my relations had sent for me to a distant county, and I entered upon a state which shall be described in my next letter.

I am, sir, &c.

MISELLA.

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N°. 171. TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 5, 1751.

Tædet cœli convexa tueri. VIRG.

Dark is the sun, and loathsome is the day.

TO THE RAMBLER.

SIR,

MISELLA now sits down to continue her narrative. I am convinced that nothing would more powerfully preserve youth from irregularity, or guard inexperience from seduction, than a just description of the condition into which the wanton plunges herself; and therefore hope that my letter may be a sufficient antidote to my example.

After the distraction, hesitation, and delays which the timidity of guilt naturally produces, I was removed to lodgings in a distant part of the town, under one of the characters commonly assumed upon such occasions. Here, being by my circumstances condemned to solitude, I passed most of my hours in bitterness and anguish. The conversation of the people with whom I was placed was not at all capable of engaging my attention, or dispossessing the reigning ideas. The books which I carried to my retreat were such as heightened my abhorrence of myself; for I was not so far abandoned as to sink voluntarily into corruption, or endeavour to conceal from my own mind the enormity of my crime.

My relation remitted none of his fondness, but visited me so often, that I was sometimes afraid lest his assiduity should expose him to suspicion. Whenever he came he found me weeping, and was, therefore, less delightfully entertained than he expected. After frequent expostulations upon the unreasonableness of my sorrow, and innumerable protestations of everlasting regard, he at last found that I was more affected with the loss of my innocence, than the danger of my fame, and, that he might not be disturbed by my remorse, began to lull my conscience with the opiates of irreligion. His arguments were such as my

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course of life has since exposed me often to the necessity of hearing,—vulgar, empty, and fallacious; yet they at first confounded me by their novelty, filled me with doubt and perplexity, and interrupted that peace which I began to feel from the sincerity of my repentance, without substituting any other support. I listened awhile to his impious gabble, but its influence was soon overpowered by natural reason and early education, and the convictions which this new attempt gave me of his baseness completed my abhorrence. I have heard of barbarians, who, when tempests drive ships upon their coast, decoy them to the rocks that they may plunder their lading, and have always thought that wretches, thus merciless in their depredations, ought to be destroyed by a general insurrection of all social beings; yet how light is this guilt to the crime of him, who, in the agitations of remorse, cuts away the anchor of piety, and, when he has drawn aside credulity from the paths of virtue, hides the light of heaven which would direct her to return. I had hitherto considered him as a man equally betrayed with myself by the concurrence of appetite and opportunity; but I now saw with horrour that he was contriving to perpetuate his gratification, and was desirous to fit me to his purpose, by complete and radical corruption.

To escape, however, was not yet in my power. I could support the expenses of my condition only by the continuance of his favour. He provided all that was necessary, and in a few weeks congratulated me upon my escape from the danger which we had both expected with so much anxiety. I then began to remind him of his promise to restore me with my fame uninjured to the world. He promised me in general terms, that nothing should be wanting which his power could add to my happiness, but forbore to release me from my confinement. I knew how much my reception in the world depended upon my speedy return, and was, therefore, outrageously impatient of his delays, which I now perceived to be only artifices of lewdness. He told me at last, with an appearance of sorrow, that all hopes of restoration to my former state were for

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ever precluded; that chance had discovered my secret, and malice divulged it; and that nothing now remained, but to seek a retreat more private, where curiosity or hatred could never find us.

The rage, anguish, and resentment, which I felt at this account are not to be expressed. I was in so much dread of reproach and infamy, which he represented as pursuing me with full cry, that I yielded myself implicitly to his disposal, and was removed, with a thousand studied precautions, through by-ways and dark passages, to another house, where I harassed him with perpetual solicitations for a small annuity that might enable me to live in the country in obscurity and innocence.

This demand he at first evaded with ardent professions, but in time appeared offended at my importunity and distrust; and having one day endeavoured to sooth me with uncommon expressions of tenderness, when he found my discontent immoveable, left me with some inarticulate murmurs of anger. I was pleased that he was at last roused to sensibility, and expecting that at his next visit he would comply with my request, lived with great tranquillity upon the money in my hands, and was so much pleased with this pause of persecution, that I did not reflect how much his absence had exceeded the usual intervals, till I was alarmed with the danger of wanting subsistence. I then suddenly contracted my expenses, but was unwilling to supplicate for assistance. Necessity, however, soon overcame my modesty or my pride, and I applied to him by a letter, but had no answer. I writ in terms more pressing, but without effect. I then sent an agent to inquire after him, who informed me, that he had quitted his house, and was gone with his family to reside for some time on his estate in Ireland.

However shocked at this abrupt departure, I was yet unwilling to believe that he could wholly abandon me, and therefore, by the sale of my clothes, I supported myself, expecting that every post would bring me relief. Thus I passed seven months between hope and dejection, in a

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gradual approach to poverty and distress, emaciated with discontent, and bewildered with uncertainty. At last my landlady, after many hints of the necessity of a new lover, took the opportunity of my absence to search my boxes, and missing some of my apparel, seized the remainder for rent, and led me to the door.

To remonstrate against legal cruelty, was vain; to supplicate obdurate brutality, was hopeless. I went away I knew not whither, and wandered about without any settled purpose, unacquainted with the usual expedients of misery, unqualified for laborious offices, afraid to meet an eye that had seen me before, and hopeless of relief from those who were strangers to my former condition. Night came on in the midst of my distraction, and I still continued to wander till the menaces of the watch obliged me to shelter myself in a covered passage.

Next day, I procured a lodging in the backward garret of a mean house, and employed my landlady to inquire for a service. My applications were generally rejected for want of a character. At length I was received at a draper's, but when it was known to my mistress that I had only one gown, and that of silk, she was of opinion that I looked like a thief, and without warning hurried me away. I then tried to support myself by my needle; and, by my landlady's recommendation obtained a little work from a shop, and for three weeks lived without repining; but when my punctuality had gained me so much reputation, that I was trusted to make up a head of some value, one of my fellow-lodgers stole the lace, and I was obliged to fly from a prosecution.

Thus driven again into the streets, I lived upon the least that could support me, and at night accommodated myself under penthouses as well as I could. At length I became absolutely pennyless, and having strolled all day without sustenance, was, at the close of evening, accosted by an elderly man, with an invitation to a tavern. I refused him with hesitation; he seized me by the hand, and drew me into a neighbouring house, where, when he

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saw my face pale with hunger, and my eyes swelling with tears, he spurned me from him, and bade me cant and whine in some other place; he for his part would take care of his pockets.

I still continued to stand in the way, having scarcely strength to walk further, when another soon addressed me in the same manner. When he saw the same tokens of calamity, he considered that I might be obtained at a cheap rate, and, therefore, quickly made overtures, which I no longer had firmness to reject. By this man I was maintained four months in penurious wickedness, and then abandoned to my former condition, from which I was delivered by another keeper.

In this abject state I have now passed four years, the drudge of extortion and the sport of drunkenness; sometimes the property of one man, and sometimes the common prey of accidental lewdness; at one time tricked up for sale by the mistress of a brothel, at another begging in the streets to be relieved from hunger by wickedness; without any hope in the day but of finding some whom folly or excess may expose to my allurements, and without any reflections at night, but such as guilt and terrour impress upon me.

If those who pass their days in plenty and security, could visit for an hour the dismal receptacles to which the prostitute retires from her nocturnal excursions, and see the wretches that lie crowded together, mad with intemperance, ghastly with famine, nauseous with filth, and noisome with disease; it would not be easy for any degree of abhorrence to harden them against compassion, or to repress the desire which they must immediately feel to rescue such numbers of human beings from a state so dreadful.

It is said, that in France they annually evacuate their streets, and ship their prostitutes and vagabonds to their colonies. If the women that infest this city had the same opportunity of escaping from their miseries, I believe very little force would be necessary; for who among them can

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dread any change? Many of us, indeed, are wholly unqualified for any but the most servile employments, and those, perhaps, would require the care of a magistrate to hinder them from following the same practices in another country; but others are only precluded by infamy from reformation, and would gladly be delivered, on any terms, from the necessity of guilt, and the tyranny of chance. No place but a populous city, can afford opportunities for open prostitution; and where the eye of justice can attend to individuals, those who cannot be made good may be restrained from mischief. For my part, I should exult at the privilege of banishment, and think myself happy in any region that should restore me once again to honesty and peace. I am, sir, &c.

MISELLA.

N°. 172. SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 9, 1751.

Sæpe rogare soles, qualis sim, Prisce, futurus,
Si fiam locuples, simque repente potens.
Quemquam posse putas mores narrare futuros?
Dic mihi, si fias tu leo, qualis eris? MART. Lib. xii. Ep. 93.

Priscus, you've often ask'd me how I'd live,
Should fate at once both wealth and honour give.
What soul his future conduct can foresee?
Tell me what sort of lion you would be. F. LEWIS.

NOTHING has been longer observed, than that a change of fortune causes a change of manners; and that it is difficult to conjecture from the conduct of him whom we see in a low condition, how he would act, if wealth and power were put into his hands. But it is generally agreed, that few men are made better by affluence or exaltation; and that the powers of the mind, when they are unbound and expanded by the sunshine of felicity, more frequently luxuriate into follies, than blossom into goodness.

Many observations have concurred to establish this opinion, and it is not likely soon to become obsolete, for

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want of new occasions to revive it. The greater part of mankind are corrupt in every condition, and differ in high and in low stations, only as they have more or fewer opportunities of gratifying their desires, or as they are more or less restrained by human censures. Many vitiate their principles in the acquisition of riches; and who can wonder that what is gained by fraud and extortion is enjoyed with tyranny and excess?

Yet I am willing to believe that the depravation of the mind by external advantages, though certainly not uncommon, yet approaches not so nearly to universality, as some have asserted in the bitterness of resentment, or heat of declamation.

Whoever rises above those who once pleased themselves with equality, will have many malevolent gazers at his eminence. To gain sooner than others that which all pursue with the same ardour, and to which all imagine themselves entitled, will for ever be a crime. When those who started with us in the race of life, leave us so far behind, that we have little hope to overtake them, we revenge our disappointment by remarks on the arts of supplantation by which they gained the advantage, or on the folly and arrogance with which they possess it. Of them, whose rise we could not hinder, we solace ourselves by prognosticating the fall.

It is impossible for human purity not to betray to an eye, thus sharpened by malignity, some stains which lay concealed and unregarded, while none thought it their interest to discover them; nor can the most circumspect attention, or steady rectitude, escape blame from censors, who have no inclination to approve. Riches therefore, perhaps, do not so often produce crimes as incite accusers.

The common charge against those who rise above their original condition, is that of pride. It is certain that success naturally confirms us in a favourable opinion of our own abilities. Scarce any man is willing to allot to accident, friendship, and a thousand causes, which concur in

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every event without human contrivance or interposition, the part which they may justly claim in his advancement. We rate ourselves by our fortune rather than our virtues, and exorbitant claims are quickly produced by imaginary merit. But captiousness and jealousy are, likewise, easily offended, and to him who studiously looks for an affront, every mode of behaviour will supply it; freedom will be rudeness, and reserve sullenness; mirth will be negligence, and seriousness formality; when he is received with ceremony, distance and respect are inculcated; if he is treated with familiarity, he concludes himself insulted by condescensions.

It must, however, be confessed, that as all sudden changes are dangerous, a quick transition from poverty to abundance can seldom be made with safety. He that has long lived within sight of pleasures which he could not reach, will need more than common moderation, not to lose his reason in unbounded riot, when they are first put into his power.

Every possession is endeared by novelty; every gratification is exaggerated by desire. It is difficult not to estimate what is lately gained above its real value; it is impossible not to annex greater happiness to that condition from which we are unwillingly excluded, than nature has qualified us to obtain. For this reason, the remote inheritor of an unexpected fortune, may be generally distinguished from those who are enriched in the common course of lineal descent, by his greater haste to enjoy his wealth, by the finery of his dress, the pomp of his equipage, the splendour of his furniture, and the luxury of his table.

A thousand things which familiarity discovers to be of little value, have power for a time to seize the imagination. A Virginian king, when the Europeans had fixed a lock on his door, was so delighted to find his subjects admitted or excluded with such facility, that it was from morning to evening his whole employment to turn the key.

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We, among whom locks and keys have been longer in use, are inclined to laugh at this American amusement; yet I doubt whether this paper will have a single reader that may not apply the story to himself, and recollect some hours of his life in which he has been equally overpowered by the transitory charms of trifling novelty.

Some indulgence is due to him whom a happy gale of fortune has suddenly transported into new regions, where unaccustomed lustre dazzles his eyes, and untasted delicacies solicit his appetite. Let him not be considered as lost in hopeless degeneracy, though he for awhile forgets the regard due to others, to indulge the contemplation of himself, and in the extravagance of his first raptures expects that his eye should regulate the motions of all that approach him, and his opinion be received as decisive and oraculous. His intoxication will give way to time; the madness of joy will fume imperceptibly away; the sense of his insufficiency will soon return; he will remember that the co-operation of others is necessary to his happiness, and learn to conciliate their regard by reciprocal beneficence.

There is, at least, one consideration which ought to alleviate our censures of the powerful and rich. To imagine them chargeable with all the guilt and folly of their own actions, is to be very little acquainted with the world:

De l'absolu pouvoir vous ignorez l'ivresse,
Et du lâche flatteur la voix enchanteresse.

Thou hast not known the giddy whirls of fate,
Nor servile flatteries which enchant the great. Miss A. W.

He that can do much good or harm, will not find many whom ambition or cowardice will suffer to be sincere. While we live upon the level with the rest of mankind, we are reminded of our duty by the admonitions of friends and reproaches of enemies; but men who stand in the highest ranks of society, seldom hear of their faults; if by any accident an opprobrious clamour reaches their ears,

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flattery is always at hand to pour in her opiates, to quiet conviction, and obtund remorse.

Favour is seldom gained but by conformity in vice. Virtue can stand without assistance, and considers herself as very little obliged by countenance and approbation: but vice, spiritless and timorous, seeks the shelter of crowds, and support of confederacy. The sycophant, therefore, neglects the good qualities of his patron, and employs all his art on his weaknesses and follies, regales his reigning vanity, or stimulates his prevalent desires.

Virtue is sufficiently difficult with any circumstances, but the difficulty is increased when reproof and advice are frighted away. In common life, reason and conscience have only the appetites and passions to encounter; but in higher stations, they must oppose artifice and adulation. He, therefore, that yields to such temptations, cannot give those who look upon his miscarriage much reason for exultation, since few can justly presume that from the same snare they should have been able to escape.

N°. 173. TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 12, 1751.

Quo virtus, quo ferat error. HOR. De Ar. Poet. 308.

Now say, where virtue stops, and vice begins?

As any action or posture, long continued, will distort and disfigure the limbs; so the mind, likewise, is crippled and contracted by perpetual application to the same set of ideas. It is easy to guess the trade of an artisan by his knees, his fingers, or his shoulders: and there are few among men of the more liberal professions, whose minds do not carry the brand of their calling, or whose conversation does not quickly discover to what class of the community they belong.

These peculiarities have been of great use, in the general hostility which every part of mankind exercises against the rest, to furnish insults and sarcasms. Every

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art has its dialect, uncouth and ungrateful to all whom custom has not reconciled to its sound, and which, therefore, becomes ridiculous by a slight misapplication, or unnecessary repetition.

The general reproach with which ignorance revenges the superciliousness of learning, is that of pedantry; a censure which every man incurs, who has at any time the misfortune to talk to those who cannot understand him, and by which the modest and timorous are sometimes frighted from the display of their acquisitions, and the exertion of their powers.

The name of a pedant is so formidable to young men when they first sally from their colleges, and is so liberally scattered by those who mean to boast their elegance of education, easiness of manners, and knowledge of the world, that it seems to require particular consideration; since, perhaps, if it were once understood, many a heart might be freed from painful apprehensions, and many a tongue delivered from restraint.

Pedantry is the unseasonable ostentation of learning. It may be discovered either in the choice of a subject, or in the manner of treating it. He is undoubtedly guilty of pedantry, who, when he has made himself master of some abstruse and uncultivated part of knowledge, obtrudes his remarks and discoveries upon those whom he believes unable to judge of his proficiency, and from whom, as he cannot fear contradiction, he cannot properly expect applause.

To this errour the student is sometimes betrayed by the natural recurrence of the mind to its common employment, by the pleasure which every man receives from the recollection of pleasing images, and the desire of dwelling upon topicks, on which he knows himself able to speak with justness. But because we are seldom so far prejudiced in favour of each other, as to search out for palliations, this failure of politeness is imputed always to vanity; and the harmless collegiate, who, perhaps, intended entertainment and instruction, or, at worst, only spoke without sufficient

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reflection upon the character of his hearers, is censured as arrogant or overbearing, and eager to extend his renown, in contempt of the convenience of society and the laws of conversation.

All discourse of which others cannot partake, is not only an irksome usurpation of the time devoted to pleasure and entertainment, but, what never fails to excite very keen resentment, an insolent assertion of superiority, and a triumph over less enlightened understandings. The pedant is, therefore, not only heard with weariness, but malignity; and those who conceive themselves insulted by his knowledge, never fail to tell with acrimony how injudiciously it was exerted.

To avoid this dangerous imputation, scholars sometimes divest themselves with too much haste of their academical formality, and in their endeavours to accommodate their notions and their style to common conceptions, talk rather of any thing than of that which they understand, and sink into insipidity of sentiment and meanness of expression.

There prevails among men of letters an opinion, that all appearance of science is particularly hateful to women; and that, therefore, whoever desires to be well received in female assemblies, must qualify himself by a total rejection of all that is serious, rational, or important; must consider argument or criticism, as perpetually interdicted; and devote all his attention to trifles, and all his eloquence to compliment.

Students often form their notions of the present generation from the writings of the past, and are not very early informed of those changes which the gradual diffusion of knowledge, or the sudden caprice of fashion, produces in the world. Whatever might be the state of female literature in the last century, there is now no longer any danger lest the scholar should want an adequate audience at the tea-table; and whoever thinks it necessary to regulate his conversation by antiquated rules, will be rather despised for his futility than caressed for his politeness.

To talk intentionally in a manner above the compre-

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hension of those whom we address, is unquestionable pedantry; but surely complaisance requires, that no man should, without proof, conclude his company incapable of following him to the highest elevation of his fancy, or the utmost extent of his knowledge. It is always safer to err in favour of others than of ourselves, and, therefore, we seldom hazard much by endeavouring to excel.

It ought, at least, to be the care of learning, when she quits her exaltation, to descend with dignity. Nothing is more despicable than the airiness and jocularity of a man bred to severe science, and solitary meditation. To trifle agreeably is a secret which schools cannot impart; that gay negligence and vivacious levity, which charm down resistance wherever they appear, are never attainable by him who, having spent his first years among the dust of libraries, enters late into the gay world with an unpliant attention and established habits.

It is observed in the panegyrick on Fabricius the mechanist, that, though forced by publick employments into mingled conversation, he never lost the modesty and seriousness of the convent, nor drew ridicule upon himself by an affected imitation of fashionable life. To the same praise every man devoted to learning ought to aspire. If he attempts the softer arts of pleasing, and endeavours to learn the graceful bow and the familiar embrace, the insinuating accent and the general smile, he will lose the respect due to the character of learning, without arriving at the envied honour of doing any thing with elegance and facility.

Theophrastus was discovered not to be a native of Athens, by so strict an adherence to the Attick dialect, as showed that he had learned it not by custom, but by rule. A man not early formed to habitual elegance, betrays, in like manner, the effects of his education, by an unnecessary anxiety of behaviour. It is as possible to become pedantick, by fear of pedantry, as to be troublesome by ill-timed civility. There is no kind of impertinence more justly censurable than his who is always la-

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bouring to level thoughts to intellects higher than his own; who apologizes for every word which his own narrowness of converse inclines him to think unusual; keeps the exuberance of his faculties under visible restraint; is solicitous to anticipate inquiries by needless explanations; and endeavours to shade his own abilities, lest weak eyes should be dazzled with their lustre.

N°. 174. SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 15, 1751.

Fœnum habet in cornu, longe fuge; dummodo risum
Excutiat sibi, non hic cuiquam parcet amico. HOR. Lib. i. Sat. iv. 34.

Yonder he drives—avoid that furious beast:
If he may have his jest, he never cares
At whose expense; nor friend nor patron spares. FRANCIS.

TO THE RAMBLER.

MR. RAMBLER,

THE laws of social benevolence require, that every man should endeavour to assist others by his experience. He that has at last escaped into port from the fluctuations of chance, and the gusts of opposition, ought to make some improvements in the chart of life, by marking the rocks on which he has been dashed, and the shallows where he has been stranded.

The errour into which I was betrayed, when custom first gave me up to my own direction, is very frequently incident to the quick, the sprightly, the fearless, and the gay; to all whose ardour hurries them into precipitate execution of their designs, and imprudent declaration of their opinions; who seldom count the cost of pleasure, or examine the distant consequences of any practice that flatters them with immediate gratification.

I came forth into the crowded world with the usual juvenile ambition, and desired nothing beyond the title of a wit. Money I considered as below my care; for I saw such multitudes grow rich without understanding, that I

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could not forbear to look on wealth as an acquisition easy to industry, directed by genius, and therefore threw it aside as a secondary convenience, to be procured when my principal wish should be satisfied, and the claim to intellectual excellence universally acknowledged.

With this view I regulated my behaviour in publick, and exercised my meditations in solitude. My life was divided between the care of providing topicks for the entertainment of my company, and that of collecting company worthy to be entertained; for I soon found, that wit, like every other power, has its boundaries; that its success depends upon the aptitude of others to receive impressions; and that as some bodies, indissoluble by heat, can set the furnace and crucible at defiance, there are minds upon which the rays of fancy may be pointed without effect, and which no fire of sentiment can agitate or exalt.

It was, however, not long before I fitted myself with a set of companions who knew how to laugh, and to whom no other recommendation was necessary than the power of striking out a jest. Among those I fixed my residence, and for a time enjoyed the felicity of disturbing the neighbours every night with the obstreperous applause which my sallies forced from the audience. The reputation of our club every day increased, and as my flights and remarks were circulated by my admirers, every day brought new solicitations for admission into our society.

To support this perpetual fund of merriment, I frequented every place of concourse, cultivated the acquaintance of all the fashionable race, and passed the day in a continual succession of visits, in which I collected a treasure of pleasantry for the expenses of the evening. Whatever errour of conduct I could discover, whatever peculiarity of manner I could observe, whatever weakness was betrayed by confidence, whatever lapse was suffered by neglect, all was drawn together for the diversion of my wild companions, who, when they had been taught the art of ridicule, never failed to signalize themselves by a zealous

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imitation, and filled the town on the ensuing day with scandal and vexation, with merriment and shame.

I can scarcely believe, when I recollect my own practice, that I could have been so far deluded with petty praise, as to divulge the secrets of trust, and to expose the levities of frankness; to waylay the walks of the cautious, and surprise the security of the thoughtless. Yet it is certain, that for many years I heard nothing but with design to tell it, and saw nothing with any other curiosity than after some failure that might furnish out a jest.

My heart, indeed, acquits me of deliberate malignity, or interested insidiousness. I had no other purpose than to heighten the pleasure of laughter by communication, nor ever raised any pecuniary advantage from the calamities of others. I led weakness and negligence into difficulties, only that I might divert myself with their perplexities and distresses; and violated every law of friendship, with no other hope than that of gaining the reputation of smartness and waggery.

I would not be understood to charge myself with any crimes of the atrocious or destructive kind. I never betrayed an heir to gamesters, or a girl to debauchees; never intercepted the kindness of a patron, or sported away the reputation of innocence. My delight was only in petty mischief, and momentary vexations, and my acuteness was employed not upon fraud and oppression, which it had been meritorious to detect, but upon harmless ignorance or absurdity, prejudice or mistake.

This inquiry I pursued with so much diligence and sagacity, that I was able to relate, of every man whom I knew, some blunder or miscarriage; to betray the most circumspect of my friends into follies, by a judicious flattery of his predominant passion; or expose him to contempt, by placing him in circumstances which put his prejudices into action, brought to view his natural defects, or drew the attention of the company on his airs of affectation.

The power had been possessed in vain if it had never

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been exerted; and it was not my custom to let any arts of jocularity remain unemployed. My impatience of applause brought me always early to the place of entertainment; and I seldom failed to lay a scheme with the small knot that first gathered round me, by which some of those whom we expected might be made subservient to our sport. Every man has some favourite topick of conversation, on which, by a feigned seriousness of attention, he may be drawn to expatiate without end. Every man has some habitual contortion of body, or established mode of expression, which never fails to raise mirth if it be pointed out to notice. By premonitions of these particularities I secured our pleasantry. Our companion entered with his usual gaiety, and began to partake of our noisy cheerfulness, when the conversation was imperceptibly diverted to a subject which pressed upon his tender part, and extorted the expected shrug, the customary exclamation, or the predicted remark. A general clamour of joy then burst from all that were admitted to the stratagem. Our mirth was often increased by the triumph of him that occasioned it; for as we do not hastily form conclusions against ourselves, seldom any one suspected, that he had exhilarated us otherwise than by his wit.

You will hear, I believe, with very little surprise, that by this conduct I had in a short time united mankind against me, and that every tongue was diligent in prevention or revenge. I soon perceived myself regarded with malevolence or distrust, but wondered what had been discovered in me either terrible or hateful. I had invaded no man's property; I had rivalled no man's claims; nor had ever engaged in any of those attempts which provoke the jealousy of ambition or the rage of faction. I had lived but to laugh, and make others laugh; and believed that I was loved by all who caressed, and favoured by all who applauded me. I never imagined, that he who, in the mirth of a nocturnal revel, concurred in ridiculing his friend, would consider, in a cooler hour, that the same trick might be played against himself; or that even where there is no

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sense of danger, the natural pride of human nature rises against him, who, by general censures, lays claim to general superiority.

I was convinced, by a total desertion, of the impropriety of my conduct; every man avoided, and cautioned others to avoid me. Wherever I came, I found silence and dejection, coldness and terrour. No one would venture to speak, lest he should lay himself open to unfavourable representations; the company, however numerous, dropped off at my entrance upon various pretences; and, if I retired to avoid the shame of being left, I heard confidence and mirth revive at my departure.

If those whom I had thus offended could have contented themselves with repaying one insult for another, and kept up the war only by a reciprocation of sarcasms, they might have perhaps vexed, but would never have much hurt me; for no man heartily hates him at whom he can laugh. But these wounds which they give me as they fly, are without cure; this alarm which they spread by their solicitude to escape me, excludes me from all friendship and from all pleasure. I am condemned to pass a long interval of my life in solitude, as a man suspected of infection is refused admission into cities; and must linger in obscurity, till my conduct shall convince the world, that I may be approached without hazard.

I am, &c.

DICACULUS.

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N°. 175. TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 19, 1751.

Rari quippe boni, numerus vix est totidem quot
Thebarum portæ, vel divitis ostia Nili. Juv. Sat. xiii. 26.

Good men are scarce, the just are thinly sown:
They thrive but ill, nor can they last when grown.
And should we count them, and our store compile,
Yet Thebes more gates could show, more mouths the Nile. Creech.

None of the axioms of wisdom which recommend the ancient sages to veneration, seems to have required less extent of knowledge or perspicacity of penetration, than the remark of Bias, that οἱ πλέονες κακοὶ, "The majority are wicked."

The depravity of mankind is so easily discoverable, that nothing but the desert or the cell can exclude it from notice. The knowledge of crimes intrudes uncalled and undesired. They whom their abstraction from common occurrences hinders from seeing iniquity, will quickly have their attention awakened by feeling it. Even he who ventures not into the world, may learn its corruption in his closet. For what are treatises of morality, but persuasives to the practice of duties, for which no arguments would be necessary, but that we are continually tempted to violate or neglect them? What are all the records of history, but narratives of successive villanies, of treasons and usurpations, massacres and wars?

But, perhaps, the excellence of aphorisms consists not so much in the expression of some rare and abstruse sentiment, as in the comprehension of some obvious and useful truths in a few words. We frequently fall into errour and folly, not because the true principles of action are not known, but because, for a time, they are not remembered; and he may, therefore, be justly numbered among the benefactors of mankind, who contracts the great rules of life into short sentences, that may be easily impressed on the memory, and taught by frequent recollection to recur habitually to the mind.

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However those who have passed through half the life of man, may now wonder that any should require to be cautioned against corruption, they will find that they have themselves purchased their conviction by many disappointments and vexations which an earlier knowledge would have spared them; and may see, on every side, some entangling themselves in perplexities, and some sinking into ruin, by ignorance or neglect of the maxim of Bias.

Every day sends out, in quest of pleasure and distinction, some heir fondled in ignorance, and flattered into pride. He comes forth with all the confidence of a spirit unacquainted with superiours, and all the benevolence of a mind not yet irritated by opposition, alarmed by fraud, or imbittered by cruelty. He loves all, because he imagines himself the universal favourite. Every exchange of salutation produces new acquaintance, and every acquaintance kindles into friendship.

Every season brings a new flight of beauties into the world, who have hitherto heard only of their own charms, and imagine that the heart feels no passion but that of love. They are soon surrounded by admirers whom they credit, because they tell them only what is heard with delight. Whoever gazes upon them is a lover; and whoever forces a sigh, is pining in despair.

He, surely, is a useful monitor, who inculcates to these thoughtless strangers, that the *majority are wicked;* who informs them, that the train which wealth and beauty draw after them, is lured only by the scent of prey; and that, perhaps, among all those who crowd about them with professions and flatteries, there is not one who does not hope for some opportunity to devour or betray them, to glut himself by their destruction, or to share their spoils with a stronger savage.

Virtue presented singly to the imagination or the reason, is so well recommended by its own graces, and so strongly supported by arguments, that a good man wonders how any can be bad; and they who are ignorant of the force of

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passion and interest, who never observed the arts of seduction, the contagion of example, the gradual descent from one crime to another, or the insensible depravation of the principles by loose conversation, naturally expect to find integrity in every bosom, and veracity on every tongue.

It is, indeed, impossible not to hear from those who have lived longer, of wrongs and falsehoods, of violence and circumvention; but such narratives are commonly regarded by the young, the heady, and the confident, as nothing more than the murmurs of peevishness, or the dreams of dotage; and, notwithstanding all the documents of hoary wisdom, we commonly plunge into the world fearless and credulous, without any foresight of danger, or apprehension of deceit.

I have remarked, in a former paper, that credulity is the common failing of unexperienced virtue; and that he who is spontaneously suspicious, may be justly charged with radical corruption; for, if he has not known the prevalence of dishonesty by information, nor had time to observe it with his own eyes, whence can he take his measures of judgment but from himself?

They who best deserve to escape the snares of artifice, are most likely to be entangled. He that endeavours to live for the good of others, must always be exposed to the arts of them who live only for themselves, unless he is taught by timely precepts the caution required in common transactions, and shown at a distance the pitfalls of treachery.

To youth, therefore, it should be carefully inculcated, that, to enter the road of life without caution or reserve, in expectation of general fidelity and justice, is to launch on the wide ocean without the instruments of steerage, and to hope that every wind will be prosperous, and that every coast will afford a harbour.

To enumerate the various motives to deceit and injury, would be to count all the desires that prevail among the sons of men; since there is no ambition, however petty, no

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wish, however absurd, that, by indulgence, will not be enabled to overpower the influence of virtue. Many there are, who openly, and almost professedly, regulate all their conduct by their love of money; who have no other reason for action or forbearance, for compliance or refusal, than that they hope to gain more by one than by the other. These are, indeed, the meanest and cruelest of human beings; a race with whom, as with some pestiferous animals, the whole creation seems to be at war; but who, however detested or scorned, long continue to add heap to heap, and when they have reduced one to beggary, are still permitted to fasten on another.

Others, yet less rationally wicked, pass their lives in mischief, because they cannot bear the sight of success, and mark out every man for hatred, whose fame or fortune they believe increasing.

Many, who have not advanced to these degrees of guilt, are yet wholly unqualified for friendship, and unable to maintain any constant or regular course of kindness. Happiness may be destroyed not only by union with the man who is apparently the slave of interest, but with him whom a wild opinion of the dignity of perseverance, in whatever cause, disposes to pursue every injury with unwearied and perpetual resentment; with him whose vanity inclines him to consider every man as a rival in every pretension; with him whose airy negligence puts his friend's affairs or secrets in continual hazard, and who thinks his forgetfulness of others excused by his inattention to himself; and with him whose inconstancy ranges without any settled rule of choice through varieties of friendship, and who adopts and dismisses favourites by the sudden impulse of caprice.

Thus numerous are the dangers to which the converse of mankind exposes us, and which can be avoided only by prudent distrust. He, therefore, that, remembering this salutary maxim, learns early to withhold his fondness from fair appearances, will have reason to pay some honours to Bias of Priene, who enabled him to become wise without the cost of experience.

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N°. 176. SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 23, 1751.

———*Naso suspendis adunco.* Hor. Lib. i. Sat. vi. 5.

On me you turn the nose.———

THERE are many vexatious accidents, and uneasy situations, which raise little compassion for the sufferer, and which no man but those whom they immediately distress can regard with seriousness. Petty mischiefs, that have no influence on futurity, nor extend their effects to the rest of life, are always seen with a kind of malicious pleasure. A mistake or embarrassment, which, for the present moment, fills the face with blushes, and the mind with confusion, will have no other effect upon those who observe it, than that of convulsing them with irresistible laughter. Some circumstances of misery are so powerfully ridiculous, that neither kindness nor duty can withstand them; they bear down love, interest, and reverence, and force the friend, the dependant, or the child, to give way to instantaneous motions of merriment.

Among the principal of comick calamities, may be reckoned the pain which an author, not yet hardened into insensibility, feels at the onset of a furious critick, whose age, rank, or fortune, gives him confidence to speak without reserve; who heaps one objection upon another, and obtrudes his remarks, and enforces his corrections, without tenderness or awe.

The author, full of the importance of his work, and anxious for the justification of every syllable, starts and kindles at the slightest attack; the critick, eager to establish his superiority, triumphing in every discovery of failure, and zealous to impress the cogency of his arguments, pursues him from line to line without cessation or remorse. The critick, who hazards little, proceeds with vehemence, impetuosity, and fearlessness; the author, whose quiet and fame, and life and immortality, are involved in the controversy, tries every art of subterfuge and defence; maintains modestly what he resolves never to

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yield, and yields unwillingly what cannot be maintained. The critick's purpose is to conquer, the author only hopes to escape; the critick, therefore, knits his brow, and raises his voice, and rejoices whenever he perceives any tokens of pain excited by the pressure of his assertions, or the point of his sarcasms. The author, whose endeavour is at once to mollify and elude his persecutor, composes his features and softens his accent, breaks the force of assault by retreat, and rather steps aside than flies or advances.

As it very seldom happens that the rage of extemporary criticism inflicts fatal or lasting wounds, I know not that the laws of benevolence entitle this distress to much sympathy. The diversion of baiting an author has the sanction of all ages and nations, and is more lawful than the sport of teasing other animals, because, for the most part, he comes voluntarily to the stake, furnished, as he imagines, by the patron powers of literature, with resistless weapons, and impenetrable armour, with the mail of the boar of Erymanth, and the paws of the lion of Nemea.

But the works of genius are sometimes produced by other motives than vanity; and he whom necessity or duty enforces to write, is not always so well satisfied with himself, as not to be discouraged by censorious impudence. It may, therefore, be necessary to consider, how they whom publication lays open to the insults of such as their obscurity secures against reprisals, may extricate themselves from unexpected encounters.

Vida, a man of considerable skill in the politicks of literature, directs his pupil wholly to abandon his defence, and even when he can irrefragably refute all objections, to suffer tamely the exultations of his antagonist.

This rule may, perhaps, be just when advice is asked, and severity solicited, because no man tells his opinion so freely as when he imagines it received with implicit veneration; and critioks ought never to be consulted, but while errours may yet be rectified or insipidity suppressed. But when the book has once been dismissed into the world, and can be no more retouched, I know not whether a very dif-

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ferent conduct should not be prescribed, and whether firmness and spirit may not sometimes be of use to overpower arrogance, and repel brutality. Softness, diffidence, and moderation, will often be mistaken for imbecility and dejection; they lure cowardice to the attack by the hopes of easy victory, and it will soon be found that he whom every man thinks he can conquer, shall never be at peace.

The animadversions of criticks are commonly such as may easily provoke the sedatest writer to some quickness of resentment and asperity of reply. A man, who by long consideration has familiarized a subject to his own mind, carefully surveyed the series of his thoughts, and planned all the parts of his composition into a regular dependence on each other, will often start at the sinistrous interpretations or absurd remarks of haste and ignorance, and wonder by what infatuation they have been led away from the obvious sense, and upon what peculiar principles of judgment they decide against him.

The eye of the intellect, like that of the body, is not equally perfect in all, nor equally adapted in any to all objects: the end of criticism is to supply its defects; rules are the instruments of mental vision, which may, indeed, assist our faculties when properly used, but produce confusion and obscurity by unskilful application.

Some seem always to read with the microscope of criticism, and employ their whole attention upon minute elegance, or faults scarcely visible to common observation. The dissonance of a syllable, the recurrence of the same sound, the repetition of a particle, the smallest deviation from propriety, the slightest defect in construction or arrangement, swell before their eyes into enormities. As they discern with great exactness, they comprehend but a narrow compass, and know nothing of the justness of the design, the general spirit of the performance, the artifice of connexion, or the harmony of the parts; they never conceive how small a proportion that which they are busy in contemplating bears to the whole, or how the petty in-

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accuracies, with which they are offended, are absorbed and lost in general excellence.

Others are furnished by criticism with a telescope. They see with great clearness whatever is too remote to be discovered by the rest of mankind, but are totally blind to all that lies immediately before them. They discover in every passage some secret meaning, some remote allusion, some artful allegory, or some occult imitation, which no other reader ever suspected; but they have no perception of the cogency of arguments, the force of pathetick sentiments, the various colours of diction, or the flowery embellishments of fancy; of all that engages the attention of others they are totally insensible, while they pry into worlds of conjecture, and amuse themselves with phantoms in the clouds.

In criticism, as in every other art, we fail sometimes by our weakness, but more frequently by our fault. We are sometimes bewildered by ignorance, and sometimes by prejudice, but we seldom deviate far from the right, but when we deliver ourselves up to the direction of vanity.

N°. 177. TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 26, 1751.

Turpe est difficiles habere nugas. MART. Lib. ii. Ep. lxxxvi. 9.

Those things which now seem frivolous and slight,
Will be of serious consequence to you,
When they have made you once ridiculous. ROSCOMMON.

TO THE RAMBLER.

SIR,

WHEN I was, at the usual time, about to enter upon the profession to which my friends had destined me, being summoned, by the death of my father, into the country, I found myself master of an unexpected sum of money, and of an estate, which, though not large, was, in my opinion, sufficient to support me in a condition far preferable to the fatigue, dependence, and uncertainty of

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any gainful occupation. I therefore resolved to devote the rest of my life wholly to curiosity, and without any confinement of my excursions, or termination of my views, to wander over the boundless regions of general knowledge.

This scheme of life seemed pregnant with inexhaustible variety, and therefore I could not forbear to congratulate myself upon the wisdom of my choice. I furnished a large room with all conveniencies for study; collected books of every kind; quitted every science at the first perception of disgust; returned to it again as soon as my former ardour happened to revive; and having no rival to depress me by comparison, nor any critick to alarm me with objections, I spent day after day in profound tranquillity, with only so much complaisance in my own improvements, as served to excite and animate my application.

Thus I lived for some years with complete acquiescence in my own plan of conduct, rising early to read, and dividing the latter part of the day between economy, exercise, and reflection. But, in time, I began to find my mind contracted and stiffened by solitude. My ease and elegance were sensibly impaired; I was no longer able to accommodate myself with readiness to the accidental current of conversation; my notions grew particular and paradoxical, and my phraseology formal and unfashionable; I spoke, on common occasions, the language of books. My quickness of apprehension, and celerity of reply, had entirely deserted me; when I delivered my opinion, or detailed my knowledge, I was bewildered by an unseasonable interrogatory, disconcerted by any slight opposition, and overwhelmed and lost in dejection, when the smallest advantage was gained against me in dispute. I became decisive and dogmatical, impatient of contradiction, perpetually jealous of my character, insolent to such as acknowledged my superiority, and sullen and malignant to all who refused to receive my dictates.

This I soon discovered to be one of those intellectual

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diseases which a wise man should make haste to cure. I therefore resolved for a time to shut my books, and learn again the art of conversation; to defecate and clear my mind by brisker motions, and stronger impulses; and to unite myself once more to the living generation.

For this purpose I hasted to London, and entreated one of my academical acquaintances to introduce me into some of the little societies of literature which are formed in taverns and coffee-houses. He was pleased with an opportunity of showing me to his friends, and soon obtained me admission among a select company of curious men, who met once a week to exhilarate their studies, and compare their acquisitions.

The eldest and most venerable of this society was Hirsutus, who, after the first civilities of my reception, found means to introduce the mention of his favourite studies, by a severe censure of those who want the due regard for their native country. He informed me, that he had early withdrawn his attention from foreign trifles, and that since he began to addict his mind to serious and manly studies, he had very carefully amassed all the English books that were printed in the black character. This search he had pursued so diligently, that he was able to show the deficiencies of the best catalogues. He had long since completed his Caxton, had three sheets of Treveris unknown to the antiquaries, and wanted to a perfect Pynson but two volumes, of which one was promised him as a legacy by its present possessor, and the other he was resolved to buy, at whatever price, when Quisquilius's library should be sold. Hirsutus had no other reason for the valuing or slighting a book, than that it was printed in the Roman or the Gothic letter, nor any ideas but such as his favourite volumes had supplied; when he was serious he expatiated on the narratives of "Johan de Trevisa," and when he was merry, regaled us with a quotation from the "Shippe of Foles."

While I was listening to this hoary student, Ferratus entered in a hurry, and informed us, with the abruptness

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of ecstacy, that his set of halfpence was now complete; he had just received in a handful of change, the piece that he had so long been seeking, and could now defy mankind to outgo his collection of English copper.

Chartophylax then observed how fatally human sagacity was sometimes baffled, and how often the most valuable discoveries are made by chance. He had employed himself and his emissaries seven years at great expense to perfect his series of Gazettes, but had long wanted a single paper, which, when he despaired of obtaining it, was sent him wrapped round a parcel of tobacco.

Cantilenus turned all his thoughts upon old ballads, for he considered them as the genuine records of the national taste. He offered to show me a copy of "The Children in the Wood," which he firmly believed to be of the first edition, and, by the help of which the text might be freed from several corruptions, if this age of barbarity had any claim to such favours from him.

Many were admitted into this society as inferiour members, because they had collected old prints and neglected pamphlets, or possessed some fragment of antiquity, as the seal of an ancient corporation, the charter of a religious house, the genealogy of a family extinct, or a letter written in the reign of Elizabeth.

Every one of these virtuosos looked on all his associates as wretches of depraved taste and narrow notions. Their conversation was, therefore, fretful and waspish, their behaviour brutal, their merriment bluntly sarcastick, and their seriousness gloomy and suspicious. They were totally ignorant of all that passes, or has lately passed, in the world; unable to discuss any question of religious, political, or military knowledge; equally strangers to science and politer learning, and without any wish to improve their minds, or any other pleasure than that of displaying rarities, of which they would not suffer others to make the proper use.

Hirsutus graciously informed me, that the number of their society was limited, but that I might sometimes at-

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tend as an auditor. I was pleased to find myself in no danger of an honour, which I could not have willingly accepted, nor gracefully refused, and left them without any intention of returning; for I soon found that the suppression of those habits with which I was vitiated, required association with men very different from this solemn race.

I am, sir, &c.

VIVACULUS.

It is natural to feel grief or indignation when any thing necessary or useful is wantonly wasted, or negligently destroyed; and, therefore, my correspondent cannot be blamed for looking with uneasiness on the waste of life. Leisure and curiosity might soon make great advances in useful knowledge, were they not diverted by minute emulation and laborious trifles. It may, however, somewhat mollify his anger to reflect, that, perhaps, none of the assembly which he describes, was capable of any nobler employment, and that he who does his best, however little, is always to be distinguished from him who does nothing. Whatever busies the mind without corrupting it, has at least this use, that it rescues the day from idleness, and he that is never idle will not often be vitious.

N°. 178. SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 30, 1751.

Pars sanitatis velle sanaria fuit. SENECA.
To yield to remedies is half the cure.

PYTHAGORAS is reported to have required from those whom he instructed in philosophy a probationary silence of five years. Whether this prohibition of speech extended to all the parts of this time, as seems generally to be supposed, or was to be observed only in the school or in the presence of their master, as is more probable, it was sufficient to discover the pupil's disposition; to try whether he was willing to pay the price of learning, or whether he

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was one of those whose ardour was rather violent than lasting, and who expected to grow wise on other terms than those of patience and obedience.

Many of the blessings universally desired, are very frequently wanted, because most men, when they should labour, content themselves to complain, and rather linger in a state in which they cannot be at rest, than improve their condition by vigour and resolution.

Providence has fixed the limits of human enjoyment by immoveable boundaries, and has set different gratifications at such a distance from each other, that no art or power can bring them together. This great law it is the business of every rational being to understand, that life may not pass away in an attempt to make contradictions consistent, to combine opposite qualities, and to unite things which the nature of their being must always keep asunder.

Of two objects tempting at a distance on contrary sides, it is impossible to approach one but by receding from the other; by long deliberation and dilatory projects, they may be both lost, but can never be both gained. It is, therefore, necessary to compare them, and, when we have determined the preference, to withdraw our eyes and our thoughts at once from that which reason directs us to reject. This is more necessary, if that which we are forsaking has the power of delighting the senses, or firing the fancy. He that once turns aside to the allurements of unlawful pleasure, can have no security that he shall ever regain the paths of virtue.

The philosophick goddess of Boethius, having related the story of Orpheus, who, when he had recovered his wife from the dominions of death, lost her again by looking back upon her in the confines of light, concludes with a very elegant and forcible application. "Whoever you are that endeavour to elevate your minds to the illuminations of heaven, consider yourselves as represented in this fable; for he that is once so far overcome as to turn back his eyes towards the infernal caverns, loses at the first sight all that influence which attracted him on high:"

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Vos hæc fabula respicit,
Quicunque in superum diem
Mentem ducere quæritis.
Nam qui Tartareum in specus
Victus lumina flexerit,
Quidquid præcipuum trahit,
Perdit, dum videt inferos.

It may be observed, in general, that the future is purchased by the present. It is not possible to secure distant or permanent happiness but by the forbearance of some immediate gratification. This is so evidently true with regard to the whole of our existence, that all the precepts of theology have no other tendency than to enforce a life of faith; a life regulated not by our senses but our belief; a life in which pleasures are to be refused for fear of invisible punishments, and calamities sometimes to be sought, and always endured, in hope of rewards that shall be obtained in another state.

Even if we take into our view only that particle of our duration which is terminated by the grave, it will be found that we cannot enjoy one part of life beyond the common limitations of pleasure, but by anticipating some of the satisfaction which should exhilarate the following years. The heat of youth may spread happiness into wild luxuriance, but the radical vigour requisite to make it perennial is exhausted, and all that can be hoped afterwards is languor and sterility.

The reigning errour of mankind is, that we are not content with the conditions on which the goods of life are granted. No man is insensible of the value of knowledge, the advantages of health, or the convenience of plenty, but every day shows us those on whom the conviction is without effect.

Knowledge is praised and desired by multitudes whom her charms could never rouse from the couch of sloth; whom the faintest invitation of pleasure draws away from their studies; to whom any other method of wearing out the day is more eligible than the use of books, and who are

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more easily engaged by any conversation, than such as may rectify their notions or enlarge their comprehension.

Every man that has felt pain, knows how little all other comforts can gladden him to whom health is denied. Yet who is there does not sometimes hazard it for the enjoyment of an hour? All assemblies of jollity, all places of publick entertainment, exhibit examples of strength wasting in riot, and beauty withering in irregularity; nor is it easy to enter a house in which part of the family is not groaning in repentance of past intemperance, and part admitting disease by negligence, or soliciting it by luxury.

There is no pleasure which men of every age and sect have more generally agreed to mention with contempt, than the gratifications of the palate; an entertainment so far removed from intellectual happiness, that scarcely the most shameless of the sensual herd have dared to defend it: yet even to this, the lowest of our delights, to this, though neither quick nor lasting, is health with all its activity and sprightliness daily sacrificed; and for this are half the miseries endured which urge impatience to call on death.

The whole world is put in motion by the wish for riches and the dread of poverty. Who, then, would not imagine that such conduct as will inevitably destroy what all are thus labouring to acquire, must generally be avoided? That he who spends more than he receives, must in time become indigent, cannot be doubted; but, how evident soever this consequence may appear, the spendthrift moves in the whirl of pleasure with too much rapidity to keep it before his eyes, and, in the intoxication of gaiety, grows every day poorer without any such sense of approaching ruin as is sufficient to wake him into caution.

Many complaints are made of the misery of life; and, indeed, it must be confessed that we are subject to calamities by which the good and bad, the diligent and slothful, the vigilant and heedless, are equally afflicted. But surely, though some indulgence may be allowed to groans

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extorted by inevitable misery, no man has a right to repine at evils which, against warning, against experience, he deliberately and leisurely brings upon his own head; or to consider himself as debarred from happiness by such obstacles as resolution may break or dexterity may put aside.

Great numbers who quarrel with their condition, have wanted not the power but the will to obtain a better state. They have never contemplated the difference between good and evil sufficiently to quicken aversion, or invigorate desire; they have indulged a drowsy thoughtlessness or giddy levity; have committed the balance of choice to the management of caprice; and when they have long accustomed themselves to receive all that chance offered them, without examination, lament at last that they find themselves deceived.

N°. 179. TUESDAY, DECEMBER 3, 1751.

Perpetuo risu pulmonem agitare solebat. JUV. Sat. x. 33.

Democritus would feed his spleen, and shake
His sides and shoulders till he felt them ake. DRYDEN

EVERY man, says Tully, has two characters; one which he partakes with all mankind, and by which he is distinguished from brute animals; another which discriminates him from the rest of his own species, and impresses on him a manner and temper peculiar to himself; this particular character, if it be not repugnant to the laws of general humanity, it is always his business to cultivate and preserve.

Every hour furnishes some confirmation of Tully's precept. It seldom happens, that an assembly of pleasure is so happily selected, but that some one finds admission, with whom the rest are deservedly offended; and it will appear, on a close inspection, that scarce any man be-

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comes eminently disagreeable, but by a departure from his real character, and an attempt at something for which nature or education have left him unqualified.

Ignorance or dulness have indeed no power of affording delight, but they never give disgust except when they assume the dignity of knowledge, or ape the sprightliness of wit. Awkwardness and inelegance have none of those attractions by which ease and politeness take possession of the heart; but ridicule and censure seldom rise against them, unless they appear associated with that confidence which belongs only to long acquaintance with the modes of life, and to consciousness of unfailing propriety of behaviour. Deformity itself is regarded with tenderness rather than aversion, when it does not attempt to deceive the sight by dress and decoration, and to seize upon fictitious claims the prerogatives of beauty.

He that stands to contemplate the crowds that fill the streets of a populous city, will see many passengers whose air and motion it will be difficult to behold without contempt and laughter; but if he examines what are the appearances that thus powerfully excite his risibility, he will find among them neither poverty nor disease, nor any involuntary or painful defect. The disposition to derision and insult is awakened by the softness of foppery, the swell of insolence, the liveliness of levity, or the solemnity of grandeur; by the sprightly trip, the stately stalk, the formal strut, the lofty mien; by gestures intended to catch the eye, and by looks elaborately formed as evidences of importance.

It has, I think, been sometimes urged in favour of affectation, that it is only a mistake of the means to a good end, and that the intention with which it is practised is always to please. If all attempts to innovate the constitutional or habitual character have really proceeded from publick spirit and love of others, the world has hitherto been sufficiently ungrateful, since no return but scorn has yet been made to the most difficult of all enterprises, a contest with

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nature; nor has any pity been shown to the fatigues of labour which never succeeded, and the uneasiness of disguise by which nothing was concealed.

It seems therefore to be determined by the general suffrage of mankind, that he who decks himself in adscititious qualities rather purposes to command applause than impart pleasure: and he is therefore treated as a man who, by an unreasonable ambition, usurps the place in society to which he has no right. Praise is seldom paid with willingness even to incontestable merit, and it can be no wonder that he who calls for it without desert is repulsed with universal indignation.

Affectation naturally counterfeits those excellencies which are placed at the greatest distance from possibility of attainment. We are conscious of our own defects, and eagerly endeavour to supply them by artificial excellence; nor would such efforts be wholly without excuse, were they not often excited by ornamental trifles, which he, that thus anxiously struggles for the reputation of possessing them, would not have been known to want, had not his industry quickened observation.

Gelasimus passed the first part of his life in academical privacy and rural retirement, without any other conversation than that of scholars, grave, studious, and abstracted as himself. He cultivated the mathematical sciences with indefatigable diligence, discovered many useful theorems, discussed with great accuracy the resistance of fluids, and, though his priority was not generally acknowledged, was the first who fully explained all the properties of the catenarian curve.

Learning, when it rises to eminence, will be observed in time, whatever mists may happen to surround it. Gelasimus, in his forty-ninth year, was distinguished by those who have the rewards of knowledge in their hands, and called out to display his acquisitions for the honour of his country, and add dignity by his presence to philosophical assemblies. As he did not suspect his unfitness for common affairs, he felt no reluctance to obey the invitation,

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and what he did not feel he had yet too much honesty to feign. He entered into the world as a larger and more populous college, where his performances would be more publick, and his renown farther extended; and imagined that he should find his reputation universally prevalent, and the influence of learning every where the same.

His merit introduced him to splendid tables and elegant acquaintance; but he did not find himself always qualified to join in the conversation. He was distressed by civilities, which he knew not how to repay, and entangled in many ceremonial perplexities, from which his books and diagrams could not extricate him. He was sometimes unluckily engaged in disputes with ladies, with whom algebraick axioms had no great weight, and saw many whose favour and esteem he could not but desire, to whom he was very little recommended by his theories of the tides, or his approximations to the quadrature of the circle.

Gelasimus did not want penetration to discover, that no charm was more generally irresistible than that of easy facetiousness and flowing hilarity. He saw that diversion was more frequently welcome than improvement; that authority and seriousness were rather feared than loved; and that the grave scholar was a kind of imperious ally, hastily dismissed when his assistance was no longer necessary. He came to a sudden resolution of throwing off those cumbrous ornaments of learning which hindered his reception, and commenced a man of wit and jocularity. Utterly unacquainted with every topick of merriment, ignorant of the modes and follies, the vices and virtues of mankind, and unfurnished with any ideas but such as Pappas and Archimedes had given him, he began to silence all inquiries with a jest instead of a solution, extended his face with a grin, which he mistook for a smile, and in the place of scientifick discourse, retailed in a new language, formed between the college and the tavern, the intelligence of the newspaper.

Laughter, he knew, was a token of alacrity; and, therefore, whatever he said or heard, he was careful not to fail

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in that great duty of a wit. If he asked or told the hour of the day, if he complained of heat or cold, stirred the fire, or filled a glass, removed his chair, or snuffed a candle, he always found some occasion to laugh. The jest was indeed a secret to all but himself; but habitual confidence in his own discernment hindered him from suspecting any weakness or mistake. He wondered that his wit was so little understood, but expected that his audience would comprehend it by degrees, and persisted all his life to shew by gross buffoonery, how little the strongest faculties can perform beyond the limits of their own province.

N°. 180. SATURDAY, DECEMBER 7, 1751.

Ταῦτ' εἰδὼς σοφὸς ἴσθι, μάτην δ' Ἐπίκουρον ἔασον
Ποῦ τὸ κενὸν ζητεῖν, καὶ τίνες αἱ μονάδες. AUTOMEDON.

On life, on morals, be thy thoughts employ'd;
Leave to the schools their atoms and their void.

IT is somewhere related by Le Clerc, that a wealthy trader of good understanding, having the common ambition to breed his son a scholar, carried him to an university, resolving to use his own judgment in the choice of a tutor. He had been taught, by whatever intelligence, the nearest way to the heart of an academick, and at his arrival entertained all who came about him with such profusion, that the professors were lured by the smell of his table from their books, and flocked round him with all the cringes of awkward complaisance. This eagerness answered the merchant's purpose: he glutted them with delicacies, and softened them with caresses, till he prevailed upon one after another to open his bosom, and make a discovery of his competitions, jealousies, and resentments. Having thus learned each man's character, partly from himself, and partly from his acquaintances, he resolved to find some other education for his son, and went away convinced, that a scholastick life has no other tendency than to vitiate the morals and contract the understanding: nor would

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he afterwards hear with patience the praises of the ancient authors, being persuaded that scholars of all ages must have been the same, and that Xenophon and Cicero were professors of some former university, and therefore mean and selfish, ignorant and servile, like those whom he had lately visited and forsaken.

Envy, curiosity, and a sense of the imperfection of our present state, incline us to estimate the advantages which are in the possession of others above their real value. Every one must have remarked, what powers and prerogatives the vulgar imagine to be conferred by learning. A man of science is expected to excel the unlettered and unenlightened even on occasions where literature is of no use, and among weak minds, loses part of his reverence, by discovering no superiority in those parts of life, in which all are unavoidably equal; as when a monarch makes a progress to the remoter provinces, the rustics are said sometimes to wonder that they find him of the same size with themselves.

These demands of prejudice and folly can never be satisfied; and therefore many of the imputations which learning suffers from disappointed ignorance, are without reproach. But there are some failures, to which men of study are peculiarly exposed. Every condition has its disadvantages. The circle of knowledge is too wide for the most active and diligent intellect, and while science is pursued, other accomplishments are neglected; as a small garrison must leave one part of an extensive fortress naked, when an alarm calls them to another.

The learned, however, might generally support their dignity with more success, if they suffered not themselves to be misled by the desire of superfluous attainments. Raphael, in return to Adam's inquiries into the courses of the stars, and the revolutions of heaven, counsels him to withdraw his mind from idle speculations, and employ his faculties upon nearer and more interesting objects, the survey of his own life, the subjection of his passions, the knowledge of duties which must daily be performed,

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and the detection of dangers which must daily be incurred.

This angelick counsel every man of letters should always have before him. He that devotes himself to retired study naturally sinks from omission to forgetfulness of social duties; he must be therefore sometimes awakened and recalled to the general condition of mankind.

I am far from any intention to limit curiosity, or confine the labours of learning to arts of immediate and necessary use. It is only from the various essays of experimental industry, and the vague excursions of minds sent out upon discovery, that any advancement of knowledge can be expected; and, though many must be disappointed in their labours, yet they are not to be charged with having spent their time in vain; their example contributed to inspire emulation, and their miscarriages taught others the way to success.

But the distant hope of being one day useful or eminent, ought not to mislead us too far from that study which is equally requisite to the great and mean, to the celebrated and obscure; the art of moderating the desires, of repressing the appetites, and of conciliating or retaining the favour of mankind.

No man can imagine the course of his own life, or the conduct of the world around him, unworthy his attention; yet, among the sons of learning, many seem to have thought of every thing rather than of themselves, and to have observed every thing but what passes before their eyes: many who toil through the intricacy of complicated systems, are insuperably embarrassed with the least perplexity in common affairs; many who compare the actions, and ascertain the characters of ancient heroes, let their own days glide away without examination, and suffer vicious habits to encroach upon their minds without resistance or detection.

The most frequent reproach of the scholastick race is the want of fortitude, not martial but philosophick. Men bred in shades and silence, taught to immure themselves

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at sunset, and accustomed to no other weapon than syllogism, may be allowed to feel terrour at personal danger, and to be disconcerted by tumult and alarm. But why should he whose life is spent in contemplation, and whose business is only to discover truth, be unable to rectify the fallacies of imagination, or contend successfully against prejudice and passion? To what end has he read and meditated, if he gives up his understanding to false appearances, and suffers himself to be enslaved by fear of evils to which only folly or vanity can expose him, or elated by advantages to which, as they are equally conferred upon the good and bad, no real dignity is annexed.

Such, however, is the state of the world, that the most obsequious of the slaves of pride, the most rapturous of the gazers upon wealth, the most officious of the whisperers of greatness, are collected from seminaries appropriated to the study of wisdom and of virtue, where it was intended that appetite should learn to be content with little, and that hope should aspire only to honours which no human power can give or take away[1].

The student, when he comes forth into the world, instead of congratulating himself upon his exemption from the errours of those whose opinions have been formed by accident or custom, and who live without any certain principles of conduct, is commonly in haste to mingle with the multitude, and shew his sprightliness and ductility by an expeditious compliance with fashions or vices. The first smile of a man, whose fortune gives him power to reward his dependants, commonly enchants him beyond resistance; the glare of equipage, the sweets of luxury, the liberality of general promises, the softness of habitual affability, fill his imagination; and he soon ceases to have any other wish than to be well received, or any measure of right and wrong but the opinion of his patron.

[1] "Such are a sort of sacrilegious ministers in the temple of intellect. They profane its shew-bread to pamper the palate, its everlasting lamp they use to light unholy fires within their breast, and show them the way to the sensual chambers of sense and worldliness." IRVING.

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A man flattered and obeyed, learns to exact grosser adulation, and enjoin lower submission. Neither our virtues nor vices are all our own. If there were no cowardice, there would be little insolence; pride cannot rise to any great degree, but by the concurrence of blandishment or the sufferance of tameness. The wretch who would shrink and crouch before one that should dart his eyes upon him with the spirit of natural equality, becomes capricious and tyrannical when he sees himself approached with a downcast look, and hears the soft address of awe and servility. To those who are willing to purchase favour by cringes and compliance, is to be imputed the haughtiness that leaves nothing to be hoped by firmness and integrity.

If, instead of wandering after the meteors of philosophy, which fill the world with splendour for a while, and then sink and are forgotten, the candidates of learning fixed their eyes upon the permanent lustre of moral and religious truth, they would find a more certain direction to happiness. A little plausibility of discourse, and acquaintance with unnecessary speculations, is dearly purchased, when it excludes those instructions which fortify the heart with resolution, and exalt the spirit to independence.

N°. 181. TUESDAY, DECEMBER 10, 1751.

—— *Neu fluitem dubiæ spe pendulus horæ.* HOR. Lib. i. Ep. xviii. 110.

Nor let me float in fortune's pow'r,
Dependent on the future hour. FRANCIS.

TO THE RAMBLER.

SIR,

As I have passed much of my life in disquiet and suspense, and lost many opportunities of advantage by a passion which I have reason to believe prevalent in different degrees over a great part of mankind, I cannot but think myself well qualified to warn those who are yet uncaptivated, of the danger which they incur by placing themselves within its influence.

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I served an apprenticeship to a linen-draper, with uncommon reputation for diligence and fidelity; and at the age of three-and-twenty opened a shop for myself with a large stock, and such credit among all the merchants, who were acquainted with my master, that I could command whatever was imported curious or valuable. For five years I proceeded with success proportionate to close application and untainted integrity; was a daring bidder at every sale; always paid my notes before they were due; and advanced so fast in commercial reputation, that I was proverbially marked out as the model of young traders, and every one expected that a few years would make me an alderman.

In this course of even prosperity, I was one day persuaded to buy a ticket in the lottery. The sum was inconsiderable, part was to be repaid though fortune might fail to favour me, and therefore my established maxims of frugality did not restrain me from so trifling an experiment. The ticket lay almost forgotten till the time at which every man's fate was to be determined; nor did the affair even then seem of any importance, till I discovered by the publick papers that the number next to mine had conferred the great prize.

My heart leaped at the thought of such an approach to sudden riches, which I considered myself, however contrarily to the laws of computation, as having missed by a single chance; and I could not forbear to revolve the consequences which such a bounteous allotment would have produced, if it had happened to me. This dream of felicity, by degrees, took possession of my imagination. The great delight of my solitary hours was to purchase an estate, and form plantations with money which once might have been mine, and I never met my friends but I spoiled all their merriment by perpetual complaints of my ill luck.

At length another lottery was opened, and I had now so heated my imagination with the prospect of a prize, that I should have pressed among the first purchasers, had not my ardour been withheld by deliberation upon the probability of success from one ticket rather than another.

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I hesitated long between even and odd; considered the square and cubick numbers through the lottery; examined all those to which good luck had been hitherto annexed; and at last fixed upon one, which, by some secret relation to the events of my life, I thought predestined to make me happy. Delay in great affairs is often mischievous; the ticket was sold, and its possessor could not be found.

I returned to my conjectures, and after many arts of prognostication, fixed upon another chance, but with less confidence. Never did captive, heir, or lover, feel so much vexation from the slow pace of time, as I suffered between the purchase of my ticket and the distribution of the prizes. I solaced my uneasiness as well as I could, by frequent contemplation of approaching happiness; when the sun rose I knew it would set, and congratulated myself at night that I was so much nearer to my wishes. At last the day came, my ticket appeared, and rewarded all my care and sagacity with a despicable prize of fifty pounds.

My friends, who honestly rejoiced upon my success, were very coldly received; I hid myself a fortnight in the country, that my chagrin might fume away without observation, and then returning to my shop, began to listen after another lottery.

With the news of a lottery I was soon gratified, and having now found the vanity of conjecture, and inefficacy of computation, I resolved to take the prize by violence, and therefore bought forty tickets, not omitting, however, to divide them between the even and odd numbers, that I might not miss the lucky class. Many conclusions did I form, and many experiments did I try, to determine from which of those tickets I might most reasonably expect riches. At last, being unable to satisfy myself by any modes of reasoning, I wrote the numbers upon dice, and allotted five hours every day to the amusement of throwing them in a garret; and, examining the event by an exact register, found, on the evening before the lottery was drawn, that one of my numbers had been turned up

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five times more than any of the rest in three hundred and thirty thousand throws.

This experiment was fallacious; the first day presented the hopeful ticket, a detestable blank. The rest came out with different fortune, and in conclusion I lost thirty pounds by this great adventure.

I had now wholly changed the cast of my behaviour and the conduct of my life. The shop was for the most part abandoned to my servants, and if I entered it, my thoughts were so engrossed by my tickets, that I scarcely heard or answered a question, but considered every customer as an intruder upon my meditations, whom I was in haste to despatch. I mistook the price of my goods, committed blunders in my bills, forgot to file my receipts, and neglected to regulate my books. My acquaintances by degrees began to fall away; but I perceived the decline of my business with little emotion, because whatever deficience there might be in my gains, I expected the next lottery to supply.

Miscarriage naturally produces diffidence; I began now to seek assistance against ill luck, by an alliance with those that had been more successful. I inquired diligently at what office any prize had been sold, that I might purchase of a propitious vender; solicited those who had been fortunate in former lotteries, to partake with me in my new tickets; and whenever I met with one that had in any event of his life been eminently prosperous, I invited him to take a larger share. I had, by this rule of conduct, so diffused my interest, that I had a fourth part of fifteen tickets, an eighth of forty, and a sixteenth of ninety.

I waited for the decision of my fate with my former palpitations, and looked upon the business of my trade with the usual neglect. The wheel at last was turned, and its revolutions brought me a long succession of sorrows and disappointments. I indeed often partook of a small prize, and the loss of one day was generally balanced by the gain of the next; but my desires yet remained un-

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satisfied, and when one of my chances had failed, all my expectation was suspended on those which remained yet undetermined. At last a prize of five thousand pounds was proclaimed; I caught fire at the cry, and inquiring the number, found it to be one of my own tickets, which I had divided among those on whose luck I depended, and of which I had retained only a sixteenth part.

You will easily judge with what detestation of himself, a man thus intent upon gain reflected that he had sold a prize which was once in his possession. It was to no purpose, that I represented to my mind the impossibility of recalling the past, or the folly of condemning an act, which only its event, an event which no human intelligence could foresee, proved to be wrong. The prize which, though put in my hands, had been suffered to slip from me, filled me with anguish, and knowing that complaint would only expose me to ridicule, I gave myself up silently to grief, and lost by degrees my appetite and my rest.

My indisposition soon became visible; I was visited by my friends, and among them by Eumathes, a clergyman, whose piety and learning gave him such an ascendant over me, that I could not refuse to open my heart. There are, said he, few minds sufficiently firm to be trusted in the hands of chance. Whoever finds himself inclined to anticipate futurity, and exalt possibility to certainty, should avoid every kind of casual adventure, since his grief must be always proportionate to his hope. You have long wasted that time, which, by a proper application, would have certainly, though moderately, increased your fortune, in a laborious and anxious pursuit of a species of gain, which no labour or anxiety, no art or expedient, can secure or promote. You are now fretting away your life in repentance of an act, against which repentance can give no caution, but to avoid the occasion of committing it. Rouse from this lazy dream of fortuitous riches, which, if obtained, you could scarcely have enjoyed, because they could confer no consciousness of

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desert; return to rational and manly industry, and consider the mere gift of luck as below the care of a wise man.

N°. 182. SATURDAY, DECEMBER 14, 1751.

——Dives qui fieri vult,
Et cito vult fieri.—— Juv. Sat. xiv. 176.

The lust of wealth can never bear delay.

It has been observed in a late paper, that we are unreasonably desirous to separate the goods of life from those evils which Providence has connected with them, and to catch advantages without paying the price at which they are offered us. Every man wishes to be rich, but very few have the powers necessary to raise a sudden fortune, either by new discoveries, or by superiority of skill, in any necessary employment; and among lower understandings, many want the firmness and industry requisite to regular gain and gradual acquisitions.

From the hope of enjoying affluence by methods more compendious than those of labour, and more generally practicable than those of genius, proceeds the common inclination to experiment and hazard, and that willingness to snatch all opportunities of growing rich by chance, which, when it has once taken possession of the mind, is seldom driven out either by time or argument, but continues to waste life in perpetual delusion, and generally ends in wretchedness and want.

The folly of untimely exultation and visionary prosperity, is by no means peculiar to the purchasers of tickets; there are multitudes whose life is nothing but a continual lottery; who are always within a few months of plenty and happiness, and how often soever they are mocked with blanks, expect a prize from the next adventure.

Among the most resolute and ardent of the votaries of chance, may be numbered the mortals whose hope is to raise themselves by a wealthy match; who lay out all their

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industry on the assiduities of courtship, and sleep and wake with no other ideas than of treats, compliments, guardians and rivals.

One of the most indefatigable of this class, is my old friend Leviculus, whom I have never known for thirty years without some matrimonial project of advantage. Leviculus was bred under a merchant, and by the graces of his person, the sprightliness of his prattle, and the neatness of his dress, so much enamoured his master's second daughter, a girl of sixteen, that she declared her resolution to have no other husband. Her father, after having chidden her for undutifulness, consented to the match, not much to the satisfaction of Leviculus, who was sufficiently elated with his conquest to think himself entitled to a larger fortune. He was, however, soon rid of his perplexity, for his mistress died before their marriage.

He was now so well satisfied with his own accomplishments, that he determined to commence fortune-hunter; and when his apprenticeship expired, instead of beginning, as was expected, to walk the Exchange with a face of importance, or associating himself with those who were most eminent for their knowledge of the stocks, he at once threw off the solemnity of the counting-house, equipped himself with a modish wig, listened to wits in coffee-houses, passed his evenings behind the scenes in the theatres, learned the names of beauties of quality, hummed the last stanzas of fashionable songs, talked with familiarity of high play, boasted of his achievements upon drawers and coachmen, was often brought to his lodgings at midnight in a chair, told with negligence and jocularity of bilking a tailor, and now and then let fly a shrewd jest at a sober citizen.

Thus furnished with irresistible artillery, he turned his batteries upon the female world, and, in the first warmth of self-approbation, proposed no less than the possession of riches and beauty united. He therefore paid his civilities to Flavilla, the only daughter of a wealthy shopkeeper, who not being accustomed to amorous blandish-

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ments, or respectful addresses, was delighted with the novelty of love, and easily suffered him to conduct her to the play, and to meet her where she visited. Leviculus did not doubt but her father, however offended by a clandestine marriage, would soon be reconciled by the tears of his daughter, and the merit of his son-in-law, and was in haste to conclude the affair. But the lady liked better to be courted than married, and kept him three years in uncertainty and attendance. At last she fell in love with a young ensign at a ball, and having danced with him all night, married him in the morning.

Leviculus, to avoid the ridicule of his companions, took a journey to a small estate in the country, where, after his usual inquiries concerning the nymphs in the neighbourhood, he found it proper to fall in love with Altilia, a maiden lady, twenty years older than himself, for whose favour fifteen nephews and nieces were in perpetual contention. They hovered round her with such jealous officiousness, as scarcely left a moment vacant for a lover. Leviculus, nevertheless, discovered his passion in a letter, and Altilia could not withstand the pleasure of hearing vows and sighs, and flatteries and protestations. She admitted his visits, enjoyed for five years the happiness of keeping all her expectants in perpetual alarms, and amused herself with the various stratagems which were practised to disengage her affections. Sometimes she was advised with great earnestness to travel for her health, and sometimes entreated to keep her brother's house. Many stories were spread to the disadvantage of Leviculus, by which she commonly seemed affected for a time, but took care soon afterwards to express her conviction of their falsehood. But being at last satiated with this ludicrous tyranny, she told her lover, when he pressed for the reward of his services, that she was very sensible of his merit, but was resolved not to impoverish an ancient family.

He then returned to the town, and soon after his arrival, became acquainted with Latronia, a lady distinguished by the elegance of her equipage, and the regu-

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larity of her conduct. Her wealth was evident in her magnificence, and her prudence in her economy, and therefore Leviculus, who had scarcely confidence to solicit her favour, readily acquitted fortune of her former debts, when he found himself distinguished by her with such marks of preference as a woman of modesty is allowed to give. He now grew bolder, and ventured to breathe out his impatience before her. She heard him without resentment, in time permitted him to hope for happiness, and at last fixed the nuptial day, without any distrustful reserve of pin-money, or sordid stipulations for jointure, and settlements.

Leviculus was triumphing on the eve of marriage, when he heard on the stairs the voice of Latronia's maid, whom frequent bribes had secured in his service. She soon burst into his room, and told him that she could not suffer him to be longer deceived; that her mistress was now spending the last payment of her fortune, and was only supported in her expense by the credit of his estate. Leviculus shuddered to see himself so near a precipice, and found that he was indebted for his escape to the resentment of the maid, who having assisted Latronia to gain the conquest, quarrelled with her at last about the plunder.

Leviculus was now hopeless and disconsolate, till one Sunday he saw a lady in the Mall, whom her dress declared a widow, and whom, by the jolting prance of her gait, and the broad resplendence of her countenance, he guessed to have lately buried some prosperous citizen. He followed her home, and found her to be no less than the relict of Prune the grocer, who, having no children, had bequeathed to her all his debts and dues, and his estates real and personal. No formality was necessary in addressing madam Prune, and therefore Leviculus went next morning without an introductor. His declaration was received with a loud laugh; she then collected her countenance, wondered at his impudence, asked if he knew to whom he was talking, then shewed him the door, and again laughed to find him confused. Leviculus discovered that this coarseness was

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nothing more than the coquetry of Cornhill, and next day returned to the attack. He soon grew familiar to her dialect, and in a few weeks heard, without any emotion, hints of gay clothes with empty pockets; concurred in many sage remarks on the regard due to people of property; and agreed with her in detestation of the ladies at the other end of the town, who pinched their bellies to buy fine laces, and then pretended to laugh at the city.

He sometimes presumed to mention marriage; but was always answered with a slap, a hoot, and a flounce. At last he began to press her closer, and thought himself more favourably received; but going one morning, with a resolution to trifle no longer, he found her gone to church with a young journeyman from the neighbouring shop, of whom she had become enamoured at her window.

In these, and a thousand intermediate adventures, has Leviculus spent his time, till he is now grown grey with age, fatigue, and disappointment. He begins at last to find that success is not to be expected, and being unfit for any employment that might improve his fortune, and unfurnished with any arts that might amuse his leisure, is condemned to wear out a tasteless life in narratives which few will hear, and complaints which none will pity.

N°. 183. TUESDAY, DECEMBER 17, 1751.

Nulla fides regni sociis, omnisque potestas
Impatiens consortis erit. LUCAN. Lib. i. 92.

No faith of partnership dominion owns;
Still discord hovers o'er divided thrones.

THE hostility perpetually exercised between one man and another, is caused by the desire of many for that which only few can possess. Every man would be rich, powerful, and famous; yet fame, power, and riches are only the names of relative conditions, which imply the obscurity, dependance, and poverty of greater numbers.

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This universal and incessant competition produces injury and malice by two motives, interest and envy; the prospect of adding to our possessions what we can take from others, and the hope of alleviating the sense of our disparity by lessening others, though we gain nothing to ourselves.

Of these two malignant and destructive powers, it seems probable at the first view, that interest has the strongest and most extensive influence. It is easy to conceive that opportunities to seize what has been long wanted, may excite desires almost irresistible; but surely the same eagerness cannot be kindled by an accidental power of destroying that which gives happiness to another. It must be more natural to rob for gain, than to ravage only for mischief.

Yet I am inclined to believe, that the great law of mutual benevolence is oftener violated by envy than by interest, and that most of the misery which the defamation of blameless actions, or the obstruction of honest endeavours, brings upon the world, is inflicted by men that propose no advantage to themselves but the satisfaction of poisoning the banquet which they cannot taste, and blasting the harvest which they have no right to reap.

Interest can diffuse itself but to a narrow compass. The number is never large of those who can hope to fill the posts of degraded power, catch the fragments of shattered fortune, or succeed to the honours of depreciated beauty. But the empire of envy has no limits, as it requires to its influence very little help from external circumstances. Envy may always be produced by idleness and pride, and in what place will they not be found?

Interest requires some qualities not universally bestowed. The ruin of another will produce no profit to him who has not discernment to mark his advantage, courage to seize, and activity to pursue it; but the cold malignity of envy may be exerted in a torpid and quiescent state, amidst the gloom of stupidity, in the coverts of cowardice. He that falls by the attacks of interest, is torn by hungry tigers;

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he may discover and resist his enemies. He that perishes in the ambushes of envy, is destroyed by unknown and invisible assailants, and dies like a man suffocated by a poisonous vapour, without knowledge of his danger, or possibility of contest.

Interest is seldom pursued but at some hazard. He that hopes to gain much, has commonly something to lose, and when he ventures to attack superiority, if he fails to conquer, is irrecoverably crushed. But envy may act without expense or danger. To spread suspicion, to invent calumnies, to propagate scandal, requires neither labour nor courage. It is easy for the author of a lie, however malignant, to escape detection, and infamy needs very little industry to assist its circulation.

Envy is almost the only vice which is practicable at all times, and in every place; the only passion which can never lie quiet for want of irritation: its effects therefore are every where discoverable, and its attempts always to be dreaded.

It is impossible to mention a name which any advantageous distinction has made eminent, but some latent animosity will burst out. The wealthy trader, however he may abstract himself from publick affairs, will never want those who hint, with Shylock, that ships are but boards. The beauty, adorned only with the unambitious graces of innocence and modesty, provokes, whenever she appears, a thousand murmurs of detraction. The genius, even when he endeavours only to entertain or instruct, yet suffers persecution from innumerable criticks, whose acrimony is excited merely by the pain of seeing others pleased, and of hearing applauses which another enjoys.

The frequency of envy makes it so familiar, that it escapes our notice; nor do we often reflect upon its turpitude or malignity, till we happen to feel its influence. When he that has given no provocation to malice, but by attempting to excel, finds himself pursued by multitudes whom he never saw, with all the implacability of personal resentment; when he perceives clamour and malice let

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loose upon him as a publick enemy, and incited by every stratagem of defamation; when he hears the misfortunes of his family, or the follies of his youth, exposed to the world; and every failure of conduct, or defect of nature, aggravated and ridiculed; he then learns to abhor those artifices at which he only laughed before, and discovers how much the happiness of life would be advanced by the eradication of envy from the human heart.

Envy is, indeed, a stubborn weed of the mind, and seldom yields to the culture of philosophy. There are, however, considerations, which, if carefully implanted and diligently propagated, might in time overpower and repress it, since no one can nurse it for the sake of pleasure, as its effects are only shame, anguish, and perturbation.

It is above all other vices inconsistent with the character of a social being, because it sacrifices truth and kindness to very weak temptations. He that plunders a wealthy neighbour gains as much as he takes away, and may improve his own condition in the same proportion as he impairs another's; but he that blasts a flourishing reputation, must be content with a small dividend of additional fame, so small as can afford very little consolation to balance the guilt by which it is obtained.

I have hitherto avoided that dangerous and empirical morality, which cures one vice by means of another. But envy is so base and detestable, so vile in its original, and so pernicious in its effects, that the predominance of almost any other quality is to be preferred. It is one of those lawless enemies of society, against which poisoned arrows may honestly be used. Let it therefore be constantly remembered, that whoever envies another, confesses his superiority, and let those be reformed by their pride who have lost their virtue.

It is no slight aggravation of the injuries which envy incites, that they are committed against those who have given no intentional provocation; and that the sufferer is often marked out for ruin, not because he has failed in any

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duty, but because he has dared to do more than was required.

Almost every other crime is practised by the help of some quality which might have produced esteem or love, if it had been well employed; but envy is mere unmixed and genuine evil; it pursues a hateful end by despicable means, and desires not so much its own happiness as another's misery. To avoid depravity like this, it is not necessary that any one should aspire to heroism or sanctity, but only that he should resolve not to quit the rank which nature assigns him, and wish to maintain the dignity of a human being.

N°. 184. SATURDAY, DECEMBER 21, 1751.

Permittes ipsis expendere numinibus, quid
Conveniat nobis, rebusque sit utile nostris. JUV. Sat. x. 347.

Intrust thy fortune to the pow'rs above;
Leave them to manage for thee, and to grant
What their unerring wisdom sees thee want. DRYDEN.

As every scheme of life, so every form of writing, has its advantages and inconveniencies, though not mingled in the same proportions. The writer of essays escapes many embarrassments to which a large work would have exposed him; he seldom harasses his reason with long trains of consequences, dims his eyes with the perusal of antiquated volumes, or burthens his memory with great accumulations of preparatory knowledge. A careless glance upon a favourite author, or transient survey of the varieties of life, is sufficient to supply the first hint or seminal idea, which, enlarged by the gradual accretion of matter stored in the mind, is by the warmth of fancy easily expanded into flowers, and sometimes ripened into fruit.

The most frequent difficulty by which the authors of these petty compositions are distressed, arises from the perpetual demand of novelty and change. The compiler of a system of science lays his invention at rest, and employs only his

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judgment, the faculty exerted with least fatigue. Even the relator of feigned adventures, when once the principal characters are established, and the great events regularly connected, finds incidents and episodes crowding upon his mind; every change opens new views, and the latter part of the story grows without labour out of the former. But he that attempts to entertain his reader with unconnected pieces, finds the irksomeness of his task rather increased than lessened by every production. The day calls afresh upon him for a new topick, and he is again obliged to choose, without any principle to regulate his choice.

It is indeed true, that there is seldom any necessity of looking far, or inquiring long for a proper subject. Every diversity of art or nature, every publick blessing or calamity, every domestick pain or gratification, every sally of caprice, blunder of absurdity, or stratagem of affectation, may supply matter to him whose only rule is to avoid uniformity. But it often happens, that the judgment is distracted with boundless multiplicity, the imagination ranges from one design to another, and the hours pass imperceptibly away, till the composition can be no longer delayed, and necessity enforces the use of those thoughts which then happen to be at hand. The mind, rejoicing at deliverance on any terms from perplexity and suspense, applies herself vigorously to the work before her, collects embellishments and illustrations, and sometimes finishes, with great elegance and happiness, what in a state of ease and leisure she never had begun.

It is not commonly observed, how much, even of actions, considered as particularly subject to choice, is to be attributed to accident, or some cause out of our own power, by whatever name it be distinguished. To close tedious deliberations with hasty resolves, and after long consultations with reason to refer the question to caprice, is by no means peculiar to the essayist. Let him that peruses this paper review the series of his life, and inquire how he was placed in his present condition. He will find, that of the good or ill which he has experienced, a great part came

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unexpected, without any visible gradations of approach; that every event has been influenced by causes acting without his intervention; and that whenever he pretended to the prerogative of foresight, he was mortified with new conviction of the shortness of his views.

The busy, the ambitious, the inconstant, and the adventurous, may be said to throw themselves by design into the arms of fortune, and voluntarily to quit the power of governing themselves; they engage in a course of life in which little can be ascertained by previous measures; nor is it any wonder that their time is passed between elation and despondency, hope and disappointment.

Some there are who appear to walk the road of life with more circumspection, and make no step till they think themselves secure from the hazard of a precipice, when neither pleasure nor profit can tempt them from the beaten path; who refuse to climb lest they should fall, or to run lest they should stumble, and move slowly forward without any compliance with those passions by which the heady and vehement are seduced and betrayed.

Yet even the timorous prudence of this judicious class is far from exempting them from the dominion of chance, a subtle and insidious power, who will intrude upon privacy and embarrass caution. No course of life is so prescribed and limited, but that many actions must result from arbitrary election. Every one must form the general plan of his conduct by his own reflections; he must resolve whether he will endeavour at riches or at content; whether he will exercise private or publick virtues; whether he will labour for the general benefit of mankind, or contract his beneficence to his family and dependants.

This question has long exercised the schools of philosophy, but remains yet undecided; and what hope is there that a young man, unacquainted with the arguments on either side, should determine his own destiny otherwise than by chance?

When chance has given him a partner of his bed, whom he prefers to all other women, without any proof of supe-

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rior desert, chance must again direct him in the education of his children; for, who was ever able to convince himself by arguments, that he had chosen for his son that mode of instruction to which his understanding was best adapted, or by which he would most easily be made wise or virtuous?

Whoever shall inquire by what motives he was determined on these important occasions, will find them such as his pride will scarcely suffer him to confess; some sudden ardour of desire, some uncertain glimpse of advantage, some petty competition, some inaccurate conclusion, or some example implicitly reverenced. Such are often the first causes of our resolves; for it is necessary to act, but impossible to know the consequences of action, or to discuss all the reasons which offer themselves on every part to inquisitiveness and solicitude.

Since life itself is uncertain, nothing which has life for its basis can boast much stability. Yet this is but a small part of our perplexity. We set out on a tempestuous sea in quest of some port, where we expect to find rest, but where we are not sure of admission, we are not only in danger of sinking in the way, but of being misled by meteors mistaken for stars, of being driven from our course by the changes of the wind, and of losing it by unskilful steerage; yet it sometimes happens, that cross winds blow us to a safer coast, that meteors draw us aside from whirlpools, and that negligence or errour contributes to our escape from mischiefs to which a direct course would have exposed us. Of those that, by precipitate conclusions, involve themselves in calamities without guilt, very few, however they may reproach themselves, can be certain that other measures would have been more successful.

In this state of universal uncertainty, where a thousand dangers hover about us, and none can tell whether the good that he pursues is not evil in disguise, or whether the next step will lead him to safety or destruction, nothing can afford any rational tranquillity, but the conviction that, however we amuse ourselves with unideal sounds, nothing

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in reality is governed by chance, but that the universe is under the perpetual superintendance of Him who created it; that our being is in the hands of omnipotent Goodness, by whom what appears casual to us, is directed for ends ultimately kind and merciful; and that nothing can finally hurt him who debars not himself from the Divine favour.

N°. 185. TUESDAY, DECEMBER 24, 1751.

At vindicta bonum vita jucundius ipsa,
Nempe hoc indocti.——————
Chrysippus non dicet idem, nec mite Thaletis
Ingenium, dulcique senex vicinus Hymetto,
Qui partem acceptæ sæva inter vincla Cicutæ
Accusatori nollet dare.——
——————Quippe minuti
Semper et infirmi est animi exiguique voluptas
Ultio. Juv. Sat. xiii. 180.

But O! revenge is sweet.
Thus think the crowd; who, eager to engage,
Take quickly fire, and kindle into rage.
Not so mild Thales nor Chrysippus thought,
Nor that good man, who drank the poisonous draught
With mind serene; and could not wish to see
His vile accuser drink as deep as he:
Exalted Socrates! divinely brave!
Injur'd he fell, and dying he forgave!
Too noble for revenge; which still we find
The weakest frailty of a feeble mind. DRYDEN.

No vicious dispositions of the mind more obstinately resist both the counsels of philosophy and the injunctions of religion, than those which are complicated with an opinion of dignity; and which we cannot dismiss without leaving in the hands of opposition some advantage iniquitously obtained, or suffering from our own prejudices some imputation of pusillanimity.

For this reason scarcely any law of our Redeemer is more openly transgressed, or more industriously evaded,

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than that by which he commands his followers to forgive injuries, and prohibits, under the sanction of eternal misery, the gratification of the desire which every man feels to return pain upon him that inflicts it. Many who could have conquered their anger, are unable to combat pride, and pursue offences to extremity of vengeance, lest they should be insulted by the triumph of an enemy.

But certainly no precept could better become him, at whose birth *peace* was proclaimed *to the earth*. For, what would so soon destroy all the order of society, and deform life with violence and ravage, as a permission to every one to judge his own cause, and to apportion his own recompense for imagined injuries?

It is difficult for a man of the strictest justice not to favour himself too much, in the calmest moments of solitary meditation. Every one wishes for the distinctions for which thousands are wishing at the same time, in their own opinion, with better claims. He that, when his reason operates in its full force, can thus, by the mere prevalence of self-love, prefer himself to his fellow-beings, is very unlikely to judge equitably when his passions are agitated by a sense of wrong, and his attention wholly engrossed by pain, interest, or danger. Whoever arrogates to himself the right of vengeance, shews how little he is qualified to decide his own claims, since he certainly demands what he would think unfit to be granted to another.

Nothing is more apparent than that, however injured, or however provoked, some must at last be contented to forgive. For it can never be hoped, that he who first commits an injury, will contentedly acquiesce in the penalty required: the same haughtiness of contempt, or vehemence of desire, that prompt the act of injustice, will more strongly incite its justification; and resentment can never so exactly balance the punishment with the fault, but there will remain an overplus of vengeance which even he who condemns his first action will think himself entitled to retaliate. What then can ensue but a continual exacerbation of hatred, an unextinguishable

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feud, an incessant reciprocation of mischief, a mutual vigilance to entrap, and eagerness to destroy.

Since then the imaginary right of vengeance must be at last remitted, because it is impossible to live in perpetual hostility, and equally impossible that of two enemies, either should first think himself obliged by justice to submission, it is surely eligible to forgive early. Every passion is more easily subdued before it has been long accustomed to possession of the heart; every idea is obliterated with less difficulty, as it has been more slightly impressed, and less frequently renewed. He who has often brooded over his wrongs, pleased himself with schemes of malignity, and glutted his pride with the fancied supplications of humbled enmity, will not easily open his bosom to amity and reconciliation, or indulge the gentle sentiments of benevolence and peace.

It is easiest to forgive, while there is yet little to be forgiven. A single injury may be soon dismissed from the memory; but a long succession of ill offices by degrees associates itself with every idea; a long contest involves so many circumstances, that every place and action will recall it to the mind, and fresh remembrance of vexation must still enkindle rage, and irritate revenge.

A wise man will make haste to forgive, because he knows the true value of time, and will not suffer it to pass away in unnecessary pain. He that willingly suffers the corrosions of inveterate hatred, and gives up his days and nights to the gloom of malice, and perturbations of stratagem, cannot surely be said to consult his ease. Resentment is an union of sorrow with malignity, a combination of a passion which all endeavour to avoid, with a passion which all concur to detest. The man who retires to meditate mischief, and to exasperate his own rage; whose thoughts are employed only on means of distress and contrivances of ruin; whose mind never pauses from the remembrance of his own sufferings, but to indulge some hope of enjoying the calamities of another, may justly be numbered among the most miserable of human beings,

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among those who are guilty without reward, who have neither the gladness of prosperity, nor the calm of innocence.

Whoever considers the weakness both of himself and others, will not long want persuasives to forgiveness. We know not to what degree of malignity any injury is to be imputed; or how much its guilt, if we were to inspect the mind of him that committed it, would be extenuated by mistake, precipitance, or negligence; we cannot be certain how much more we feel than was intended to be inflicted, or how much we increase the mischief to ourselves by voluntary aggravations. We may charge to design the effects of accident; we may think the blow violent only because we have made ourselves delicate and tender; we are on every side in danger of errour and of guilt; which we are certain to avoid only by speedy forgiveness.

From this pacifick and harmless temper, thus propitious to others and ourselves, to domestick tranquillity and to social happiness, no man is withheld but by pride, by the fear of being insulted by his adversary, or despised by the world.

It may be laid down as an unfailing and universal axiom, that "all pride is abject and mean." It is always an ignorant, lazy, or cowardly acquiescence in a false appearance of excellence, and proceeds not from consciousness of our attainments, but insensibility of our wants.

Nothing can be great which is not right. Nothing which reason condemns can be suitable to the dignity of the human mind. To be driven by external motives from the path which our own heart approves, to give way to any thing but conviction, to suffer the opinion of others to rule our choice, or overpower our resolves, is to submit tamely to the lowest and most ignominious slavery, and to resign the right of directing our own lives.

The utmost excellence at which humanity can arrive, is a constant and determinate pursuit of virtue, without regard to present dangers or advantage; a continual reference of every action to the divine will; an habitual appeal

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to everlasting justice; and an unvaried elevation of the intellectual eye to the reward which perseverance only can obtain. But that pride which many, who presume to boast of generous sentiments, allow to regulate their measures, has nothing nobler in view than the approbation of men, of beings whose superiority we are under no obligation to acknowledge, and who, when we have courted them with the utmost assiduity, can confer no valuable or permanent reward; of beings who ignorantly judge of what they do not understand, or partially determine what they never have examined; and whose sentence is therefore of no weight till it has received the ratification of our own conscience.

He that can descend to bribe suffrages like these, at the price of his innocence; he that can suffer the delight of such acclamations to withhold his attention from the commands of the universal Sovereign, has little reason to congratulate himself upon the greatness of his mind; whenever he awakes to seriousness and reflection, he must become despicable in his own eyes, and shrink with shame from the remembrance of his cowardice and folly.

Of him that hopes to be forgiven, it is indispensably required that he forgive. It is therefore superfluous to urge any other motive. On this great duty eternity is suspended, and to him that refuses to practise it, the Throne of mercy is inaccessible, and the Saviour of the world has been born in vain.

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N°. 186. SATURDAY, DECEMBER 28, 1751.

Pone me, pigris ubi nulla campis
Arbor æstiva recreatur aurâ———
Dulce ridentem Lalagen amabo,
Dulce loquentem. HOR. Lib. i. Ode xxii. 17.

Place me where never summer breeze
Unbinds the glebe, or warms the trees;
Where ever lowering clouds appear,
And angry Jove deforms th' inclement year:
Love and the nymph shall charm my toils,
The nymph, who sweetly speaks and sweetly smiles. FRANCIS.

OF the happiness and misery of our present state, part arises from our sensations, and part from our opinions; part is distributed by nature, and part is in a great measure apportioned by ourselves. Positive pleasure we cannot always obtain, and positive pain we often cannot remove. No man can give to his own plantations the fragrance of the Indian groves; nor will any precepts of philosophy enable him to withdraw his attention from wounds or diseases. But the negative infelicity which proceeds, not from the pressure of sufferings, but the absence of enjoyments, will always yield to the remedies of reason.

One of the great arts of escaping superfluous uneasiness, is to free our minds from the habit of comparing our condition with that of others on whom the blessings of life are more bountifully bestowed, or with imaginary states of delight and security, perhaps unattainable by mortals. Few are placed in a situation so gloomy and distressful, as not to see every day beings yet more forlorn and miserable, from whom they may learn to rejoice in their own lot.

No inconvenience is less superable by art or diligence than the inclemency of climates, and therefore none affords more proper exercise for this philosophical abstraction. A native of England, pinched with the frosts of December, may lessen his affection for his own country by suffering his imagination to wander in the vales of Asia, and sport

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among the woods that are always green, and streams that always murmur; but if he turns his thought towards the polar regions, and considers the nations to whom a great portion of the year is darkness, and who are condemned to pass weeks and months amidst mountains of snow, he will soon recover his tranquillity, and, while he stirs his fire, or throws his cloak about him, reflect how much he owes to Providence, that he is not placed in Greenland or Siberia.

The barrenness of the earth and the severity of the skies in these dreary countries, are such as might be expected to confine the mind wholly to the contemplation of necessity and distress, so that the care of escaping death from cold and hunger, should leave no room for those passions which, in lands of plenty, influence conduct, or diversify characters; the summer should be spent only in providing for the winter, and the winter in longing for the summer.

Yet learned curiosity is known to have found its way into these abodes of poverty and gloom: Lapland and Iceland have their historians, their criticks, and their poets; and love, that extends his dominion wherever humanity can be found, perhaps exerts the same power in the Greenlander's hut as in the palaces of eastern monarchs.

In one of the large caves to which the families of Greenland retire together, to pass the cold months, and which may be termed their villages or cities, a youth and maid, who came from different parts of the country, were so much distinguished for their beauty, that they were called by the rest of the inhabitants Anningait and Ajut, from a supposed resemblance to their ancestors of the same names, who had been transformed of old into the sun and moon.

Anningait for some time heard the praises of Ajut with little emotion, but at last, by frequent interviews, became sensible of her charms, and first made a discovery of his affection, by inviting her with her parents to a feast, where he placed before Ajut the tail of a whale. Ajut

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seemed not much delighted by this gallantry; yet, however, from that time was observed rarely to appear, but in a vest made of the skin of a white deer; she used frequently to renew the black dye upon her hands and forehead, to adorn her sleeves with coral and shells, and to braid her hair with great exactness.

The elegance of her dress, and the judicious disposition of her ornaments, had such an effect upon Anningait, that he could no longer be restrained from a declaration of his love. He therefore composed a poem in her praise, in which, among other heroick and tender sentiments, he protested, that "she was beautiful as the vernal willow, and fragrant as the thyme upon the mountains; that her fingers were white as the teeth of the morse, and her smile grateful as the dissolution of the ice; that he would pursue her, though she should pass the snows of the midland cliffs, or seek shelter in the caves of the eastern cannibals: that he would tear her from the embraces of the genius of the rocks, snatch her from the paws of Amarock, and rescue her from the ravine of Hafgufa." He concluded with a wish, that "whoever shall attempt to hinder his union with Ajut, might be buried without his bow, and that, in the land of souls, his skull might serve for no other use than to catch the droppings of the starry lamps."

This ode being universally applauded, it was expected that Ajut would soon yield to such fervour and accomplishments; but Ajut, with the natural haughtiness of beauty, expected all the forms of courtship; and before she would confess herself conquered, the sun returned, the ice broke, and the season of labour called all to their employments.

Anningait and Ajut for a time always went out in the same boat, and divided whatever was caught. Anningait, in the sight of his mistress, lost no opportunity of signalizing his courage: he attacked the sea-horses on the ice; pursued the seals into the water, and leaped upon the back of the whale, while he was yet struggling with the remains of life. Nor was his diligence less to accumulate

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all that could be necessary to make winter comfortable: he dried the roe of fishes and the flesh of seals; he entrapped deer and foxes, and dressed their skins to adorn his bride; he feasted her with eggs from the rocks, and strewed her tent with flowers.

It happened that a tempest drove the fish to a distant part of the coast, before Anningait had completed his store; he therefore entreated Ajut, that she would at last grant him her hand, and accompany him to that part of the country whither he was now summoned by necessity. Ajut thought him not yet entitled to such condescension, but proposed, as a trial of his constancy, that he should return at the end of summer to the cavern where their acquaintance commenced, and there expect the reward of his assiduities. "O virgin, beautiful as the sun shining on the water, consider," said Anningait, "what thou hast required. How easily may my return be precluded by a sudden frost or unexpected fogs! then must the night be passed without my Ajut. We live not, my fair, in those fabled countries, which lying strangers so wantonly describe; where the whole year is divided into short days and nights; where the same habitation serves for summer and winter; where they raise houses in rows above the ground, dwell together from year to year, with flocks of tame animals grazing in the fields about them; can travel at any time from one place to another, through ways inclosed with trees, or over walls raised upon the inland waters; and direct their course through wide countries by the sight of green hills or scattered buildings. Even in summer we have no means of crossing the mountains, whose snows are never dissolved; nor can remove to any distant residence, but in our boats coasting the bays. Consider, Ajut, a few summer-days, and a few winter-nights, and the life of man is at an end. Night is the time of ease and festivity, of revels and gaiety; but what will be the flaming lamp, the delicious seal, or the soft oil, without the smile of Ajut?"

The eloquence of Anningait was vain; the maid conti-

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nued inexorable, and they parted with ardent promises to meet again before the night of winter.

N°. 187. TUESDAY, DECEMBER 31, 1751.

Non illum nostri possunt mutare labores;
Non si frigoribus mediis Hebrumque bibamus,
Sithoniasque nives hyemis subeamus aquosæ:——
Omnia vincit amor. VIRG. Ec. x. 64.

Love alters not for us his hard decrees,
Not though beneath the Thracian clime we freeze,
Or the mild bliss of temperate skies forego,
And in mid winter tread Sithonian snow:——
Love conquers all.——— DRYDEN.

ANNINGAIT, however discomposed by the dilatory coyness of Ajut, was yet resolved to omit no tokens of amorous respect; and therefore presented her at his departure with the skins of seven white fawns, of five swans and eleven seals, with three marble lamps, ten vessels of seal oil, and a large kettle of brass, which he had purchased from a ship, at the price of half a whale, and two horns of sea-unicorns.

Ajut was so much affected by the fondness of her lover, or so much overpowered by his magnificence, that she followed him to the sea-side; and, when she saw him enter the boat, wished aloud, that he might return with plenty of skins and oil; that neither the mermaids might snatch him into the deeps, nor the spirits of the rocks confine him in their caverns.

She stood a while to gaze upon the departing vessel, and then returning to her hut, silent and dejected, laid aside, from that hour, her white deer skin, suffered her hair to spread unbraided on her shoulders, and forbore to mix in the dances of the maidens. She endeavoured to divert her thoughts, by continual application to feminine employments, gathered moss for the winter lamps, and dried grass to line the boots of Anningait. Of the skins

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which he had bestowed upon her, she made a fishing-coat, a small boat, and tent, all of exquisite manufacture; and while she was thus busied, solaced her labours with a song, in which she prayed, "that her lover might have hands stronger than the paws of the bear, and feet swifter than the feet of the reindeer; that his dart might never err, and that his boat might never leak; that he might never stumble on the ice, nor faint in the water; that the seal might rush on his harpoon, and the wounded whale might dash the waves in vain."

The large boats in which the Greenlanders transport their families, are always rowed by women; for a man will not debase himself by work, which requires neither skill nor courage. Anningait was therefore exposed by idleness to the ravages of passion. He went thrice to the stern of the boat, with an intent to leap into the water, and swim back to his mistress; but, recollecting the misery which they must endure in the winter, without oil for the lamp, or skins for the bed, he resolved to employ the weeks of absence in provision for a night of plenty and felicity. He then composed his emotions as he could, and expressed, in wild numbers and uncouth images, his hopes, his sorrows, and his fears. "O life!" says he, "frail and uncertain! where shall wretched man find thy resemblance, but in ice floating on the ocean? It towers on high, it sparkles from afar, while the storms drive and the waters beat it, the sun melts it above, and the rocks shatter it below. What art thou, deceitful pleasure! but a sudden blaze streaming from the north, which plays a moment on the eye, mocks the traveller with the hopes of light, and then vanishes for ever? What, love, art thou but a whirlpool, which we approach without knowledge of our danger, drawn on by imperceptible degrees, till we have lost all power of resistance and escape? Till I fixed my eyes on the graces of Ajut, while I had not yet called her to the banquet, I was careless as the sleeping morse, was merry as the singers in the stars. Why, Ajut, did I gaze upon thy graces? why, my fair, did I call thee to

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the banquet? Yet, be faithful, my love, remember Anningait, and meet my return with the smile of virginity. I will chase the deer, I will subdue the whale, resistless as the frost of darkness, and unwearied as the summer sun. In a few weeks I shall return prosperous and wealthy; then shall the roe-fish and the porpoise feast thy kindred; the fox and hare shall cover thy couch; the tough hide of the seal shall shelter thee from cold; and the fat of the whale illuminate thy dwelling."

Anningait having with these sentiments consoled his grief, and animated his industry, found that they had now coasted the headland, and saw the whales spouting at a distance. He therefore placed himself in his fishing-boat, called his associates to their several employments, plied his oar and harpoon with incredible courage and dexterity; and, by dividing his time between the chace and fishery, suspended the miseries of absence and suspicion.

Ajut, in the mean time, notwithstanding her neglected dress, happened, as she was drying some skins in the sun, to catch the eye of Norngsuk, on his return from hunting. Norngsuk was of birth truly illustrious. His mother had died in child-birth, and his father, the most expert fisher of Greenland, had perished by too close pursuit of the whale. His dignity was equalled by his riches; he was master of four men's and two women's boats, had ninety tubs of oil in his winter habitation, and five-and-twenty seals buried in the snow against the season of darkness. When he saw the beauty of Ajut, he immediately threw over her the skin of a deer that he had taken, and soon after presented her with a branch of coral. Ajut refused his gifts, and determined to admit no lover in the place of Anningait.

Norngsuk, thus rejected, had recourse to stratagem. He knew that Ajut would consult an Angekkok, or diviner, concerning the fate of her lover, and the felicity of her future life. He therefore applied himself to the most celebrated Angekkok of that part of the country, and, by a present of two seals and a marble kettle, obtained a promise, that when Ajut should consult him, he would declare

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that her lover was in the land of souls. Ajut, in a short time, brought him a coat made by herself, and inquired what events were to befall her, with assurances of a much larger reward at the return of Anningait, if the prediction should flatter her desires. The Angekkok knew the way to riches, and foretold that Anningait, having already caught two whales, would soon return home with a large boat laden with provisions.

This prognostication she was ordered to keep secret; and Norngsuk depending upon his artifice, renewed his addresses with greater confidence; but finding his suit still unsuccessful, applied himself to her parents with gifts and promises. The wealth of Greenland is too powerful for the virtue of a Greenlander; they forgot the merit and the presents of Anningait, and decreed Ajut to the embraces of Norngsuk. She entreated; she remonstrated; she wept, and raved; but finding riches irresistible, fled away into the uplands, and lived in a cave upon such berries as she could gather, and the birds or hares which she had the fortune to ensnare, taking care, at an hour when she was not likely to be found, to view the sea every day, that her lover might not miss her at his return.

At last she saw the great boat in which Anningait had departed, stealing slow and heavy laden along the coast. She ran with all the impatience of affection to catch her lover in her arms, and relate her constancy and sufferings. When the company reached the land, they informed her that Anningait, after the fishery was ended, being unable to support the slow passage of the vessel of carriage, had set out before them in his fishing-boat, and they expected at their arrival to have found him on shore.

Ajut, distracted at this intelligence, was about to fly into the hills, without knowing why, though she was now in the hands of her parents, who forced her back to their own hut, and endeavoured to comfort her; but when at last they retired to rest, Ajut went down to the beach; where, finding a fishing-boat, she entered it without hesitation, and telling those who wondered at her rashness, that she

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was going in search of Anningait, rowed away with great swiftness, and was seen no more.

The fate of these lovers gave occasion to various fictions and conjectures. Some are of opinion, that they were changed into stars; others imagine, that Anningait was seized in his passage by the genius of the rocks, and that Ajut was transformed into a mermaid, and still continues to seek her lover in the deserts of the sea. But the general persuasion is, that they are both in that part of the land of souls where the sun never sets, where oil is always fresh, and provisions always warm. The virgins sometimes throw a thimble and a needle into the bay, from which the hapless maid departed; and when a Greenlander would praise any couple for virtuous affection, he declares that they love like Anningait and Ajut.

N°. 188. SATURDAY, JANUARY 4, 1752.

——Si te colo, Sexte, non amabo. MART. Lib. ii. Ep. lv. 33.

The more I honour thee, the less I love.

NONE of the desires dictated by vanity is more general, or less blamable, than that of being distinguished for the arts of conversation. Other accomplishments may be possessed without opportunity of exerting them, or wanted without danger that the defect can often be remarked; but as no man can live, otherwise than in an hermitage, without hourly pleasure or vexation, from the fondness or neglect of those about him, the faculty of giving pleasure is of continual use. Few are more frequently envied than those who have the power of forcing attention wherever they come, whose entrance is considered as a promise of felicity, and whose departure is lamented, like the recess of the sun from northern climates, as a privation of all that enlivens fancy, or inspirits gaiety.

It is apparent, that to excellence in this valuable art,

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some peculiar qualifications are necessary; for every one's experience will inform him, that the pleasure which men are able to give in conversation, holds no stated proportion to their knowledge or their virtue. Many find their way to the tables and the parties of those who never consider them as of the least importance in any other place; we have all, at one time or other, been content to love those whom we could not esteem, and been persuaded to try the dangerous experiment of admitting him for a companion, whom we knew to be too ignorant for a counsellor, and too treacherous for a friend.

I question whether some abatement of character is not necessary to general acceptance. Few spend their time with much satisfaction under the eye of uncontestable superiority; and therefore, among those whose presence is courted at assemblies of jollity, there are seldom found men eminently distinguished for powers or acquisitions. The wit whose vivacity condemns slower tongues to silence, the scholar whose knowledge allows no man to fancy that he instructs him, the critick who suffers no fallacy to pass undetected, and the reasoner who condemns the idle to thought, and the negligent to attention, are generally praised and feared, reverenced and avoided.

He that would please must rarely aim at such excellence as depresses his hearers in their own opinion, or debars them from the hope of contributing reciprocally to the entertainment of the company. Merriment, extorted by sallies of imagination, sprightliness of remark, or quickness of reply, is too often what the Latins call, the Sardinian laughter, a distortion of the face without gladness of heart.

For this reason, no style of conversation is more extensively acceptable than the narrative. He who has stored his memory with slight anecdotes, private incidents, and personal peculiarities, seldom fails to find his audience favourable. Almost every man listens with eagerness to contemporary history; for almost every man has some real or imaginary connexion with a celebrated character, some

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desire to advance or oppose a rising name. Vanity often co-operates with curiosity. He that is a hearer in one place, qualifies himself to become a speaker in another; for though he cannot comprehend a series of argument, or transport the volatile spirit of wit without evaporation, he yet thinks himself able to treasure up the various incidents of a story, and please his hopes with the information which he shall give to some inferior society.

Narratives are for the most part heard without envy, because they are not supposed to imply any intellectual qualities above the common rate. To be acquainted with facts not yet echoed by plebeian mouths, may happen to one man as well as to another; and to relate them when they are known, has in appearance so little difficulty, that every one concludes himself equal to the task.

But it is not easy, and in some situations of life not possible, to accumulate such a stock of materials as may support the expense of continual narration; and it frequently happens, that they who attempt this method of ingratiating themselves, please only at the first interview; and, for want of new supplies of intelligence, wear out their stories by continual repetition.

There would be, therefore, little hope of obtaining the praise of a good companion, were it not to be gained by more compendious methods; but such is the kindness of mankind to all, except those who aspire to real merit and rational dignity, that every understanding may find some way to excite benevolence; and whoever is not envied may learn the art of procuring love. We are willing to be pleased, but are not willing to admire: we favour the mirth or officiousness that solicits our regard, but oppose the worth or spirit that enforces it.

The first place among those that please, because they desire only to please, is due to the *merry fellow*, whose laugh is loud, and whose voice is strong; who is ready to echo every jest with obstreperous approbation, and countenance every frolick with vociferations of applause. It is not necessary to a merry fellow to have in himself any

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fund of jocularity, or force of conception; it is sufficient that he always appears in the highest exaltation of gladness, for the greater part of mankind are gay or serious by infection, and follow without resistance the attraction of example.

Next to the merry fellow is the *good-natured man*, a being generally without benevolence, or any other virtue, than such as indolence and insensibility confer. The characteristick of a good-natured man is to bear a joke; to sit unmoved and unaffected amidst noise and turbulence, profaneness and obscenity; to hear every tale without contradiction; to endure insult without reply; and to follow the stream of folly, whatever course it shall happen to take. The good-natured man is commonly the darling of the petty wits, with whom they exercise themselves in the rudiments of raillery; for he never takes advantage of failings, nor disconcerts a puny satirist with unexpected sarcasms; but while the glass continues to circulate, contentedly bears the expense of an uninterrupted laughter, and retires rejoicing at his own importance.

The *modest man* is a companion of a yet lower rank, whose only power of giving pleasure is not to interrupt it. The modest man satisfies himself with peaceful silence, which all his companions are candid enough to consider as proceeding not from inability to speak, but willingness to hear.

Many, without being able to attain any general character of excellence, have some single art of entertainment which serves them as a passport through the world. One I have known for fifteen years the darling of a weekly club, because every night, precisely at eleven, he begins his favourite song, and during the vocal performance, by corresponding motions of his hand, chalks out a giant upon the wall. Another has endeared himself to a long succession of acquaintances by sitting among them with his wig reversed; another by contriving to smut the nose of any stranger who was to be initiated in the club; another by purring like a cat, and then pretending to be frighted;

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and another by yelping like a hound, and calling to the drawers to drive out the dog[k].

Such are the arts by which cheerfulness is promoted, and sometimes friendship established; arts, which those who despise them should not rigorously blame, except when they are practised at the expense of innocence; for it is always necessary to be loved, but not always necessary to be reverenced.

N°. 189. TUESDAY, JANUARY 7, 1752.

Quod tam grande Sophos clamat tibi turba togata;
Non tu, Pomponi; cœna diserta tua est. MART. Lib. vi. Ep. xlviii.

Resounding plaudits though the crowd have rung;
Thy treat is eloquent, and not thy tongue. F. LEWIS.

THE world scarcely affords opportunities of making any observation more frequently, than on false claims to commendation. Almost every man wastes part of his life in attempts to display qualities which he does not possess, and to gain applause which he cannot keep; so that scarcely can two persons casually meet, but one is offended or diverted by the ostentation of the other.

Of these pretenders it is fit to distinguish those who endeavour to deceive from them who are deceived; those who by designed impostures promote their interest, or gratify their pride, from them who mean only to force into regard their latent excellencies and neglected vir-

[k] Mrs. Piozzi, in her Anecdotes, informs us, that the man who sung, and, by corresponding motions of his arm, chalked out a giant on the wall, was one Richardson, an attorney: the ingenious imitator of a cat, was one Busby, a proctor in the Commons: and the father of Dr. Salter, of the Charter-House, a friend of Johnson's, and a member of the Ivy-Lane Club, was the person who yelped like a hound, and perplexed the distracted waiters.—Mr. Chalmers, in his preface to the Rambler, observes, that the above-quoted lively writer was the only authority for these assignments. She is certainly far too hasty and negligent to be relied on, when unsupported by other testimony.—See Preface.

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tues; who believe themselves qualified to instruct or please, and therefore invite the notice of mankind.

The artful and fraudulent usurpers of distinction deserve greater severities than ridicule and contempt, since they are seldom content with empty praise, but are instigated by passions more pernicious than vanity. They consider the reputation which they endeavour to establish as necessary to the accomplishment of some subsequent design, and value praise only as it may conduce to the success of avarice or ambition.

The commercial world is very frequently put into confusion by the bankruptcy of merchants, that assumed the splendour of wealth only to obtain the privilege of trading with the stock of other men, and of contracting debts which nothing but lucky casualties could enable them to pay; till after having supported their appearance a while by tumultuous magnificence of boundless traffick, they sink at once, and drag down into poverty those whom their equipages had induced to trust them.

Among wretches that place their happiness in the favour of the great, of beings whom only high titles or large estates set above themselves, nothing is more common than to boast of confidence which they do not enjoy; to sell promises which they know their interest unable to perform; and to reimburse the tribute which they pay to an imperious master, from the contributions of meaner dependants, whom they can amuse with tales of their influence, and hopes of their solicitation.

Even among some, too thoughtless and volatile for avarice or ambition, may be found a species of falsehood more detestable than the levee or exchange can shew. There are men that boast of debaucheries, of which they never had address to be guilty; ruin, by lewd tales, the characters of women to whom they are scarcely known, or by whom they have been rejected; destroy in a drunken frolick the happiness of families; blast the bloom of beauty, and intercept the reward of virtue.

Other artifices of falsehood, though utterly unworthy of

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an ingenuous mind, are not yet to be ranked with flagitious enormities, nor is it necessary to incite sanguinary justice against them, since they may be adequately punished by detection and laughter. The traveller who describes cities which he has never seen; the squire, who, at his return from London, tells of his intimacy with nobles to whom he has only bowed in the park or coffee-house; the author who entertains his admirers with stories of the assistance which he gives to wits of a higher rank; the city dame who talks of her visits at great houses, where she happens to know the cook-maid, are surely such harmless animals as truth herself may be content to despise without desiring to hurt them.

But of the multitudes who struggle in vain for distinction, and display their own merits only to feel more acutely the sting of neglect, a great part are wholly innocent of deceit, and are betrayed, by infatuation and credulity, to that scorn with which the universal love of praise incites us all to drive feeble competitors out of our way.

Few men survey themselves with so much severity, as not to admit prejudices in their own favour, which an artful flatterer may gradually strengthen, till wishes for a particular qualification are improved to hopes of attainment, and hopes of attainment to belief of possession. Such flatterers every one will find, who has power to reward their assiduities. Wherever there is wealth there will be dependance and expectation, and wherever there is dependance, there will be an emulation of servility.

Many of the follies which provoke general censure, are the effects of such vanity as, however it might have wantoned in the imagination, would scarcely have dared the publick eye, had it not been animated and emboldened by flattery. Whatever difficulty there may be in the knowledge of ourselves, scarcely any one fails to suspect his own imperfections, till he is elevated by others to confidence. We are almost all naturally modest and timorous; but fear and shame are uneasy sensations, and whosoever helps to remove them is received with kindness.

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Turpicula was the heiress of a large estate, and having lost her mother in her infancy, was committed to a governess, whom misfortunes had reduced to suppleness and humility. The fondness of Turpicula's father would not suffer him to trust her at a publick school, but he hired domestick teachers, and bestowed on her all the accomplishments that wealth could purchase. But how many things are necessary to happiness which money cannot obtain! Thus secluded from all with whom she might converse on terms of equality, she heard none of those intimations of her defects, which envy, petulance, or anger, produce among children, where they are not afraid of telling what they think.

Turpicula saw nothing but obsequiousness, and heard nothing but commendations. None are so little acquainted with the heart, as not to know that woman's first wish is to be handsome, and that consequently the readiest method of obtaining her kindness is to praise her beauty. Turpicula had a distorted shape and a dark complexion; yet, when the impudence of adulation had ventured to tell her of the commanding dignity of her motion, and the soft enchantment of her smile, she was easily convinced, that she was the delight or torment of every eye, and that all who gazed upon her felt the fire of envy or love. She therefore neglected the culture of an understanding which might have supplied the defects of her form, and applied all her care to the decoration of her person; for she considered that more could judge of beauty than of wit, and was, like the rest of human beings, in haste to be admired. The desire of conquest naturally led her to the lists in which beauty signalizes her power. She glittered at court, fluttered in the park, and talked aloud in the front box; but after a thousand experiments of her charms, was at last convinced that she had been flattered, and that her glass was honester than her maid.

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N°. 190. SATURDAY, DECEMBER 11, 1752.

Ploravere suis non respondere favorem
Speratum meritis.—— HOR. Lib. ii. Ep. i. 9.

Henry and Alfred——
Clos'd their long glories with a sigh, to find
Th' unwilling gratitude of base mankind. POPE.

AMONG the emirs and visiers, the sons of valour and of wisdom, that stand at the corners of the Indian throne, to assist the counsels or conduct the wars of the posterity of Timur, the first place was long held by Morad the son of Hanuth. Morad, having signalized himself in many battles and sieges, was rewarded with the government of a province, from which the fame of his wisdom and moderation was wafted to the pinnacles of Agra, by the prayers of those whom his administration made happy. The emperour called him into his presence, and gave into his hand the keys of riches, and the sabre of command. The voice of Morad was heard from the cliffs of Taurus to the Indian ocean, every tongue faultered in his presence, and every eye was cast down before him.

Morad lived many years in prosperity; every day increased his wealth, and extended his influence. The sages repeated his maxims, the captains of thousands waited his commands. Competition withdrew into the cavern of envy, and discontent trembled at his own murmurs. But human greatness is short and transitory, as the odour of incense in the fire. The sun grew weary of gilding the palaces of Morad, the clouds of sorrow gathered round his head, and the tempest of hatred roared about his dwelling.

Morad saw ruin hastily approaching. The first that forsook him were his poets; their example was followed by all those whom he had rewarded for contributing to his pleasures, and only a few, whose virtue had entitled them to favour, were now to be seen in his hall or chambers. He felt his danger, and prostrated himself at the foot of the throne. His accusers were confident and loud, his

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friends stood contented with frigid neutrality, and the voice of truth was overborne by clamour. He was divested of his power, deprived of his acquisitions, and condemned to pass the rest of his life on his hereditary estate.

Morad had been so long accustomed to crowds and business, supplicants and flattery, that he knew not how to fill up his hours in solitude; he saw with regret the sun rise to force on his eye a new day for which he had no use; and envied the savage that wanders in the desert, because he has no time vacant from the calls of nature, but is always chasing his prey, or sleeping in his den.

His discontent in time vitiated his constitution, and a slow disease seized upon him. He refused physick, neglected exercise, and lay down on his couch peevish and restless, rather afraid to die than desirous to live. His domesticks, for a time, redoubled their assiduities; but finding that no officiousness could soothe, nor exactness satisfy, they soon gave way to negligence and sloth; and he that once commanded nations, often languished in his chamber without an attendant.

In this melancholy state, he commanded messengers to recall his eldest son Abouzaid from the army. Abouzaid was alarmed at the account of his father's sickness, and hasted by long journeys to his place of residence. Morad was yet living, and felt his strength return at the embraces of his son; then commanding him to sit down at his bedside, "Abouzaid," says he, "thy father has no more to hope or fear from the inhabitants of the earth; the cold hand of the angel of death is now upon him, and the voracious grave is howling for his prey. Hear, therefore, the precepts of ancient experience, let not my last instructions issue forth in vain. Thou hast seen me happy and calamitous, thou hast beheld my exaltation and my fall. My power is in the hands of my enemies, my treasures have rewarded my accusers; but my inheritance the clemency of the emperour has spared, and my wisdom his anger could not take away. Cast thine eyes around thee; whatever thou beholdest will, in a few hours, be thine: apply thine

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ear to my dictates, and these possessions will promote thy happiness. Aspire not to public honours, enter not the palaces of kings; thy wealth will set thee above insult, let thy moderation keep thee below envy. Content thyself with private dignity, diffuse thy riches among thy friends, let every day extend thy beneficence, and suffer not thy heart to be at rest till thou art loved by all to whom thou art known. In the height of my power, I said to defamation, Who will hear thee? and to artifice, What canst thou perform? But, my son, despise not thou the malice of the weakest, remember that venom supplies the want of strength, and that the lion may perish by the puncture of an asp."

Morad expired in a few hours. Abouzaid, after the months of mourning, determined to regulate his conduct by his father's precepts, and cultivate the love of mankind by every art of kindness and endearment. He wisely considered, that domestick happiness was first to be secured, and that none have so much power of doing good or hurt, as those who are present in the hour of negligence, hear the bursts of thoughtless merriment, and observe the starts of unguarded passion. He therefore augmented the pay of all his attendants, and requited every exertion of uncommon diligence by supernumerary gratuities. While he congratulated himself upon the fidelity and affection of his family, he was in the night alarmed with robbers, who, being pursued and taken, declared that they had been admitted by one of his servants; the servant immediately confessed, that he unbarred the door, because another not more worthy of confidence was entrusted with the keys.

Abouzaid was thus convinced that a dependant could not easily be made a friend; and that while many were soliciting for the first rank of favour, all those would be alienated whom he disappointed. He therefore resolved to associate with a few equal companions selected from among the chief men of the province. With these he lived happily for a time, till familiarity set them free from restraint, and every man thought himself at liberty to in-

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dulge his own caprice, and advance his own opinions. They then disturbed each other with contrariety of inclinations, and difference of sentiments, and Abouzaid was necessitated to offend one party by concurrence, or both by indifference.

He afterwards determined to avoid a close union with beings so discordant in their nature, and to diffuse himself in a larger circle. He practised the smile of universal courtesy, and invited all to his table, but admitted none to his retirements. Many who had been rejected in his choice of friendship, now refused to accept his acquaintance; and of those whom plenty and magnificence drew to his table, every one pressed forward toward intimacy, thought himself overlooked in the crowd, and murmured because he was not distinguished above the rest. By degrees all made advances, and all resented repulse. The table was then covered with delicacies in vain; the musick sounded in empty rooms; and Abouzaid was left to form in solitude some new scheme of pleasure or security.

Resolving now to try the force of gratitude, he inquired for men of science, whose merit was obscured by poverty. His house was soon crowded with poets, sculptors, painters, and designers, who wantoned in unexperienced plenty, and employed their powers in celebration of their patron. But in a short time they forgot the distress from which they had been rescued, and began to consider their deliverer as a wretch of narrow capacity, who was growing great by works which he could not perform, and whom they overpaid by condescending to accept his bounties. Abouzaid heard their murmurs and dismissed them, and from that hour continued blind to colours, and deaf to panegyrick.

As the sons of art departed, muttering threats of perpetual infamy, Abouzaid, who stood at the gate, called to him Hamet the poet. "Hamet," said he, "thy ingratitude has put an end to my hopes and experiments: I have now learned the vanity of those labours that wish to be

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rewarded by human benevolence; I shall henceforth do good, and avoid evil, without respect to the opinion of men; and resolve to solicit only the approbation of that Being whom alone we are sure to please by endeavouring to please him."

N°. 191. TUESDAY, JANUARY 14, 1752.

Cereus in vitium flecti, monitoribus asper. HOR. Art. Poet. 163.

The youth———
Yielding like wax, th' impressive folly bears;
Rough to reproof, and slow to future cares. FRANCIS.

TO THE RAMBLER.

DEAR MR. RAMBLER,

I HAVE been four days confined to my chamber by a cold, which has already kept me from three plays, nine sales, five shows, and six card-tables, and put me seventeen visits behind-hand; and the doctor tells my mamma, that, if I fret and cry, it will settle in my head, and I shall not be fit to be seen these six weeks. But, dear Mr. Rambler, how can I help it? At this very time Melissa is dancing with the prettiest gentleman;—she will breakfast with him to-morrow, and then run to two auctions, and hear compliments, and have presents; then she will be drest, and visit, and get a ticket to the play; then go to cards and win, and come home with two flambeaux before her chair. Dear Mr. Rambler, who can bear it?

My aunt has just brought me a bundle of your papers for my amusement. She says you are a philosopher, and will teach me to moderate my desires, and look upon the world with indifference. But, dear sir, I do not wish nor intend to moderate my desires, nor can I think it proper to look upon the world with indifference, till the world looks with indifference on me. I have been forced, however, to sit this morning a whole quarter of an hour

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with your paper before my face; but just as my aunt came in, Phyllida had brought me a letter from Mr. Trip, which I put within the leaves; and read about *absence* and *inconsolableness*, and *ardour*, and *irresistible passion*, and *eternal constancy*, while my aunt imagined that I was puzzling myself with your philosophy, and often cried out, when she saw me look confused, "If there is any word "that you do not understand, child, I will explain it."

Dear soul! how old people that think themselves wise may be imposed upon! But it is fit that they should take their turn, for I am sure, while they can keep poor girls close in the nursery, they tyrannize over us in a very shameful manner, and fill our imaginations with tales of terrour, only to make us live in quiet subjection, and fancy that we can never be safe but by their protection.

I have a mamma and two aunts, who have all been formerly celebrated for wit and beauty, and are still generally admired by those that value themselves upon their understanding, and love to talk of vice and virtue, nature and simplicity, and beauty and propriety; but if there was not some hope of meeting me, scarcely a creature would come near them that wears a fashionable coat. These ladies, Mr. Rambler, have had me under their government fifteen years and a half, and have all that time been endeavouring to deceive me by such representations of life as I now find not to be true; but I know not whether I ought to impute them to ignorance or malice, as it is possible the world may be much changed since they mingled in general conversation.

Being desirous that I should love books, they told me, that nothing but knowledge could make me an agreeable companion to men of sense, or qualify me to distinguish the superficial glitter of vanity from the solid merit of understanding; and that a habit of reading would enable me to fill up the vacuities of life without the help of silly or dangerous amusements, and preserve me from the snares of idleness and the inroads of temptation.

But their principal intention was to make me afraid of

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men; in which they succeeded so well for a time, that I durst not look in their faces, or be left alone with them in a parlour; for they made me fancy, that no man ever spoke but to deceive, or looked but to allure; that the girl who suffered him that had once squeezed her hand, to approach her a second time, was on the brink of ruin; and that she who answered a billet, without consulting her relations, gave love such power over her, that she would certainly become either poor or infamous.

From the time that my leading-strings were taken off, I scarce heard any mention of my beauty but from the milliner, the mantua-maker, and my own maid; for my mamma never said more, when she heard me commended, but "the girl is very well," and then endeavoured to divert my attention by some inquiry after my needle, or my book.

It is now three months since I have been suffered to pay and receive visits, to dance at publick assemblies, to have a place kept for me in the boxes, and to play at lady Racket's rout; and you may easily imagine what I think of those who have so long cheated me with false expectations, disturbed me with fictitious terrours, and concealed from me all that I have found to make the happiness of woman.

I am so far from perceiving the usefulness or necessity of books, that if I had not dropped all pretensions to learning, I should have lost Mr. Trip, whom I once frighted into another box, by retailing some of Dryden's remarks upon a tragedy; for Mr. Trip declares, that he hates nothing like hard words, and I am sure, there is not a better partner to be found; his very walk is a dance. I have talked once or twice among ladies about principles and ideas, but they put their fans before their faces, and told me I was too wise for them, who for their part never pretended to read any thing but the play-bill, and then asked me the price of my best head.

Those vacancies of time which are to be filled up with books I have never yet obtained; for, consider, Mr. Ram-

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bler, I go to bed late, and therefore cannot rise early; as soon as I am up, I dress for the gardens; then walk in the park; then always go to some sale or show, or entertainment at the little theatre; then must be dressed for dinner; then must pay my visits; then walk in the park; then hurry to the play; and from thence to the card-table. This is the general course of the day, when there happens nothing extraordinary; but sometimes I ramble into the country, and come back again to a ball; sometimes I am engaged for a whole day and part of the night. If, at any time, I can gain an hour by not being at home, I have so many things to do, so many orders to give to the milliner, so many alterations to make in my clothes, so many visitants' names to read over, so many invitations to accept or refuse, so many cards to write, and so many fashions to consider, that I am lost in confusion, forced at last to let in company or step into my chair, and leave half my affairs to the direction of my maid.

This is the round of my day; and when shall I either stop my course, or so change it as to want a book? I suppose it cannot be imagined, that any of these diversions will soon be at an end. There will always be gardens, and a park, and auctions, and shows, and playhouses, and cards; visits will always be paid, and clothes always be worn; and how can I have time unemployed upon my hands?

But I am most at a loss to guess for what purpose they related such tragick stories of the cruelty, perfidy, and artifices of men, who, if they ever were so malicious and destructive, have certainly now reformed their manners. I have not, since my entrance into the world, found one who does not profess himself devoted to my service, and ready to live or die as I shall command him. They are so far from intending to hurt me, that their only contention is, who shall be allowed most closely to attend, and most frequently to treat me; when different places of entertainment, or schemes of pleasure are mentioned, I can see the eye sparkle and the cheeks glow of him whose proposals obtain my approbation; he then leads me off in triumph,

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adores my condescension, and congratulates himself that he has lived to the hour of felicity. Are these, Mr. Rambler, creatures to be feared? Is it likely that an injury will be done me by those who can enjoy life only while I favour them with my presence?

As little reason can I yet find to suspect them of stratagems and fraud. When I play at cards, they never take advantage of my mistakes, nor exact from me a rigorous observation of the game. Even Mr. Shuffle, a grave gentleman, who has daughters older than myself, plays with me so negligently, that I am sometimes inclined to believe he loses his money by design, and yet he is so fond of play, that he says, he will one day take me to his house in the country, that we may try by ourselves who can conquer. I have not yet promised him; but when the town grows a little empty, I shall think upon it, for I want some trinkets, like Letitia's, to my watch. I do not doubt my luck, but must study some means of amusing my relations.

For all these distinctions I find myself indebted to that beauty which I was never suffered to hear praised, and of which, therefore, I did not before know the full value. The concealment was certainly an intentional fraud, for my aunts have eyes like other people, and I am every day told, that nothing but blindness can escape the influence of my charms. Their whole account of that world which they pretend to know so well, has been only one fiction entangled with another; and though the modes of life oblige me to continue some appearances of respect, I cannot think that they, who have been so clearly detected in ignorance or imposture, have any right to the esteem, veneration, or obedience of,

Sir, Yours,

BELLARIA.

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N°. 192. SATURDAY, JANUARY 18, 1752.

Γένος οὐδὲν εἰς Ερωτα·
Σοφίη, τρόπος πατεῖται·
Μόνον ἄργυρον βλέπουσιν.
Ἀπόλοιτο πρῶτος αὐτὸς
Ὁ τὸν ἄργυρον φιλήσας.
Διὰ τοῦτον οὐκ ἀδελφὸς,
Διὰ τοῦτον οὐ τοκῆες·
Πόλεμοι, φόνοι δὲ αὐτόν.
Τὸ δὲ χεῖρον, ὀλλύμεσθα
Διὰ τοῦτον οἱ φιλοῦντες. ANACREON. ΩΔΑΙ. Μς'. 5.

Vain the noblest birth would prove,
Nor worth or wit avail in love;
'Tis gold alone succeeds—by gold
The venal sex is bought and sold.
Accurs'd be he who first of yore
Discover'd the pernicious ore!
This sets a brother's heart on fire,
And arms the son against the sire;
And what, alas! is worse than all,
To this the lover owes his fall. F. LEWIS.

TO THE RAMBLER.

SIR,

I AM the son of a gentleman, whose ancestors, for many ages, held the first rank in the country; till at last one of them, too desirous of popularity, set his house open, kept a table covered with continual profusion, and distributed his beef and ale to such as chose rather to live upon the folly of others, than their own labour, with such thoughtless liberality, that he left a third part of his estate mortgaged. His successor, a man of spirit, scorned to impair his dignity by parsimonious retrenchments, or to admit, by a sale of his lands, any participation of the rights of his manour; he therefore made another mortgage to pay the interest of the former, and pleased himself with the reflection, that his son would have the hereditary estate without the diminution of an acre.

Nearly resembling this was the practice of my wise progenitors for many ages. Every man boasted the anti-

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quity of her family, resolved to support the dignity of his birth, and lived in splendour and plenty at the expense of his heir, who, sometimes by a wealthy marriage, and sometimes by lucky legacies, discharged part of the incumbrances, and thought himself entitled to contract new debts, and to leave to his children the same inheritance of embarrassment and distress.

Thus the estate perpetually decayed; the woods were felled by one, the park ploughed by another, the fishery let to farmers by a third; at last the old hall was pulled down to spare the cost of reparation, and part of the materials sold to build a small house with the rest. We were now openly degraded from our original rank, and my father's brother was allowed with less reluctance to serve an apprenticeship, though we never reconciled ourselves heartily to the sound of haberdasher, but always talked of warehouses and a merchant, and when the wind happened to blow loud, affected to pity the hazards of commerce, and to sympathize with the solicitude of my poor uncle, who had the true retailer's terrour of adventure, and never exposed himself or his property to any wider water than the Thames.

In time, however, by continual profit and small expenses, he grew rich, and began to turn his thoughts towards rank. He hung the arms of the family over his parlour-chimney; pointed at a chariot decorated only with a cypher; became of opinion that money could not make a gentleman; resented the petulance of upstarts; told stories of alderman Puff's grandfather the porter; wondered that there was no better method for regulating precedence; wished for some dress peculiar to men of fashion; and when his servant presented a letter, always inquired whether it came from his brother the esquire.

My father was careful to send him game by every carrier, which, though the conveyance often cost more than the value, was well received, because it gave him an opportunity of calling his friends together, describing the beauty of his brother's seat, and lamenting his own folly,

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whom no remonstrances could withhold from polluting his fingers with a shop-book.

The little presents which we sent were always returned with great munificence. He was desirous of being the second founder of his family, and could not bear that we should be any longer outshone by those whom we considered as climbers upon our ruins, and usurpers of our fortune. He furnished our house with all the elegance of fashionable expense, and was careful to conceal his bounties, lest the poverty of his family should be suspected.

At length it happened that, by misconduct like our own, a large estate, which had been purchased from us, was again exposed to the best bidder. My uncle, delighted with an opportunity of reinstating the family in their possessions, came down with treasures scarcely to be imagined in a place where commerce has not made large sums familiar, and at once drove all the competitors away, expedited the writings, and took possession. He now considered himself as superior to trade, disposed of his stock, and as soon as he had settled his economy, began to shew his rural sovereignty, by breaking the hedges of his tenants in hunting, and seizing the guns or nets of those whose fortunes did not qualify them for sportsmen. He soon afterwards solicited the office of sheriff, from which all his neighbours were glad to be reprieved, but which he regarded as a resumption of ancestral claims, and a kind of restoration to blood after the attainder of a trade.

My uncle, whose mind was so filled with this change of his condition, that he found no want of domestick entertainment, declared himself too old to marry, and resolved to let the newly-purchased estate fall into the regular channel of inheritance. I was therefore considered as heir apparent, and courted with officiousness and caresses, by the gentlemen who had hitherto coldly allowed me that rank which they could not refuse, depressed me with studied neglect, and irritated me with ambiguous insults.

I felt not much pleasure from the civilities for which I knew myself indebted to my uncle's industry, till, by one

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of the invitations which every day now brought me, I was induced to spend a week with Lucius, whose daughter Flavilla I had often seen and admired like others, without any thought of nearer approaches. The inequality which had hitherto kept me at a distance being now levelled, I was received with every evidence of respect: Lucius told me the fortune which he intended for his favourite daughter; many odd accidents obliged us to be often together without company, and I soon began to find that they were spreading for me the nets of matrimony.

Flavilla was all softness and complaisance. I, who had been excluded by a narrow fortune from much acquaintance with the world, and never been honoured before with the notice of so fine a lady, was easily enamoured. Lucius either perceived my passion, or Flavilla betrayed it; care was taken, that our private meetings should be less frequent, and my charmer confessed by her eyes how much pain she suffered from our restraint. I renewed my visit upon every pretence, but was not allowed one interview without witness; at last I declared my passion to Lucius, who received me as a lover worthy of his daughter, and told me that nothing was wanting to his consent, but that my uncle should settle his estate upon me. I objected the indecency of encroaching on his life, and the danger of provoking him by such an unseasonable demand. Lucius seemed not to think decency of much importance, but admitted the danger of displeasing, and concluded that as he was now old and sickly, we might, without any inconvenience, wait for his death.

With this resolution I was better contented, as it procured me the company of Flavilla, in which the days passed away amidst continual rapture; but in time I began to be ashamed of sitting idle, in expectation of growing rich by the death of my benefactor, and proposed to Lucius many schemes of raising my own fortune by such assistance as I knew my uncle willing to give me. Lucius, afraid lest I should change my affection in absence, diverted me from my design by dissuasives to which my

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passion easily listened. At last my uncle died, and considering himself as neglected by me, from the time that Flavilla took possession of my heart, left his estate to my younger brother, who was always hovering about his bed, and relating stories of my pranks and extravagance, my contempt of the commercial dialect, and my impatience to be selling stock.

My condition was soon known, and I was no longer admitted by the father of Flavilla. I repeated the protestations of regard, which had been formerly returned with so much ardour, in a letter which she received privately, but returned by her father's footman. Contempt has driven out my love, and I am content to have purchased, by the loss of fortune, an escape from a harpy, who has joined the artifices of age to the allurements of youth. I am now going to pursue my former projects with a legacy which my uncle bequeathed me, and if I succeed, shall expect to hear of the repentance of Flavilla.

I am, Sir, Yours, &c.

CONSTANTIUS.

N°. 193. TUESDAY, JANUARY 21, 1752.

Laudis amore tumes? sunt certa piacula, quæ te
Ter pure lecto poterunt recreare libello. HOR. Lib. i. Ep. i. 36.

Or art thou vain? books yield a certain spell
To stop thy tumour; you shall cease to swell
When you have read them thrice, and studied well. CREECH.

WHATEVER is universally desired, will be sought by industry and artifice, by merit and crimes, by means good and bad, rational and absurd, according to the prevalence of virtue or vice, of wisdom or folly. Some will always mistake the degree of their own desert, and some will desire that others may mistake it. The cunning will have recourse to stratagem, and the powerful to violence, for

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the attainment of their wishes; some will stoop to theft, and others venture upon plunder.

Praise is so pleasing to the mind of man, that it is the original motive of almost all our actions. The desire of commendation, as of every thing else, is varied indeed by innumerable differences of temper, capacity, and knowledge; some have no higher wish than for the applause of a club; some expect the acclamations of a county; and some have hoped to fill the mouths of all ages and nations with their names. Every man pants for the highest eminence within his view; none, however mean, ever sinks below the hope of being distinguished by his fellow-beings, and very few have by magnanimity or piety been so raised above it, as to act wholly without regard to censure or opinion.

To be praised, therefore, every man resolves; but resolutions will not execute themselves. That which all think too parsimoniously distributed to their own claims, they will not gratuitously squander upon others, and some expedient must be tried, by which praise may be gained before it can be enjoyed.

Among the innumerable bidders for praise, some are willing to purchase at the highest rate, and offer ease and health, fortune and life. Yet even of these only a small part have gained what they so earnestly desired; the student wastes away in meditation, and the soldier perishes on the ramparts, but unless some accidental advantage cooperates with merit, neither perseverance nor adventure attracts attention, and learning and bravery sink into the grave, without honour or remembrance.

But ambition and vanity generally expect to be gratified on easier terms. It has been long observed, that what is procured by skill or labour to the first possessor, may be afterwards transferred for money; and that the man of wealth may partake all the acquisitions of courage without hazard, and all the products of industry without fatigue. It was easily discovered, that riches would obtain praise among other conveniencies, and that he whose pride was

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unluckily associated with laziness, ignorance, or cowardice, needed only to pay the hire of a panegyrist, and he might be regaled with periodical eulogies; might determine, at leisure, what virtue or science he would be pleased to appropriate, and be lulled in the evening with soothing serenades, or waked in the morning by sprightly gratulations.

The happiness which mortals receive from the celebration of beneficence which never relieved, eloquence which never persuaded, or elegance which never pleased, ought not to be envied or disturbed, when they are known honestly to pay for their entertainment. But there are unmerciful exactors of adulation, who withhold the wages of venality; retain their encomiast from year to year by general promises and ambiguous blandishments; and when he has run through the whole compass of flattery, dismiss him with contempt, because his vein of fiction is exhausted.

A continual feast of commendation is only to be obtained by merit or by wealth; many are therefore obliged to content themselves with single morsels, and recompense the infrequency of their enjoyment by excess and riot, whenever fortune sets the banquet before them. Hunger is never delicate; they who are seldom gorged to the full with praise, may be safely fed with gross compliments; for the appetite must be satisfied before it is disgusted.

It is easy to find the moment at which vanity is eager for sustenance, and all that impudence or servility can offer will be well received. When any one complains of the want of what he is known to possess in an uncommon degree, he certainly waits with impatience to be contradicted. When the trader pretends anxiety about the payment of his bills, or the beauty remarks how frightfully she looks, then is the lucky moment to talk of riches or of charms, of the death of lovers, or the honour of a merchant.

Others there are yet more open and artless, who, instead of suborning a flatterer, are content to supply his

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place, and, as some animals impregnate themselves, swell with the praises which they hear from their own tongues. *Recte is dicitur laudare sese, cui nemo alius contigit laudator.* "It is right," says Erasmus, "that he, whom no one else will commend, should bestow commendations on himself." Of all the sons of vanity, these are surely the happiest and greatest; for what is greatness or happiness but independence on external influences, exemption from hope or fear, and the power of supplying every want from the common stores of nature, which can neither be exhausted nor prohibited? Such is the wise man of the stoicks; such is the divinity of the epicureans; and such is the flatterer of himself. Every other enjoyment malice may destroy; every other panegyrick envy may withhold; but no human power can deprive the boaster of his own encomiums. Infamy may hiss, or contempt may growl, the hirelings of the great may follow fortune, and the votaries of truth may attend on virtue; but his pleasures still remain the same; he can always listen with rapture to himself, and leave those who dare not repose upon their own attestation, to be elated or depressed by chance, and toil on in the hopeless task of fixing caprice, and propitiating malice.

This art of happiness has been long practised by periodical writers, with little apparent violation of decency. When we think our excellencies overlooked by the world, or desire to recall the attention of the publick to some particular performance, we sit down with great composure and write a letter to ourselves. The correspondent, whose character we assume, always addresses us with the deference due to a superior intelligence; proposes his doubts with a proper sense of his own inability; offers an objection with trembling diffidence; and at last has no other pretensions to our notice than his profundity of respect, and sincerity of admiration, his submission to our dictates, and zeal for our success. To such a reader, it is impossible to refuse regard, nor can it easily be imagined with how much alacrity we snatch up the pen which indigna-

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tion or despair had condemned to inactivity, when we find such candour and judgment yet remaining in the world.

A letter of this kind I had lately the honour of perusing, in which, though some of the periods were negligently closed, and some expressions of familiarity were used, which I thought might teach others to address me with too little reverence, I was so much delighted with the passages in which mention was made of universal learning—unbounded genius—soul of Homer, Pythagoras, and Plato—solidity of thought—accuracy of distinction—elegance of combination—vigour of fancy—strength of reason—and regularity of composition—that I had once determined to lay it before the publick. Three times I sent it to the printer, and three times I fetched it back. My modesty was on the point of yielding, when reflecting that I was about to waste panegyricks on myself, which might be more profitably reserved for my patron, I locked it up for a better hour, in compliance with the farmer's principle, who never eats at home what he can carry to the market.

N°. 194. SATURDAY, JANUARY 25, 1752.

Si damnosa senem juvat alea, ludit et heres
Bullatus, parvoque eadem movet arma fritillo. JUV. Sat. xiv. 4.

If gaming does an aged sire entice,
Then my young master swiftly learns the vice,
And shakes in hanging sleeves the little box and dice.

J. DRYDEN, jun.

TO THE RAMBLER.

SIR,

THAT vanity which keeps every man important in his own eyes, inclines me to believe that neither you nor your readers have yet forgotten the name of Eumathes, who sent you a few months ago an account of his arrival at London, with a young nobleman his pupil. I shall there-

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fore continue my narrative without preface or recapitulation.

My pupil, in a very short time, by his mother's countenance and direction, accomplished himself with all those qualifications which constitute puerile politeness. He became in a few days a perfect master of his hat, which with a careless nicety he could put off or on, without any need to adjust it by a second motion. This was not attained but by frequent consultations with his dancing-master, and constant practice before the glass, for he had some rustick habits to overcome; but, what will not time and industry perform? A fortnight more furnished him with all the airs and forms of familiar and respectful salutation, from the clap on the shoulder to the humble bow; he practises the stare of strangeness, and the smile of condescension, the solemnity of promise, and the graciousness of encouragement, as if he had been nursed at a levee; and pronounces, with no less propriety than his father, the monosyllables of coldness, and sonorous periods of respectful profession.

He immediately lost the reserve and timidity which solitude and study are apt to impress upon the most courtly genius; was able to enter a crowded room with airy civility; to meet the glances of a hundred eyes without perturbation; and address those whom he never saw before with ease and confidence. In less than a month his mother declared her satisfaction at his proficiency by a triumphant observation, that she believed *nothing would make him blush.*

The silence with which I was contented to hear my pupil's praises, gave the lady reason to suspect me not much delighted with his acquisitions; but she attributed my discontent to the diminution of my influence, and my fears of losing the patronage of the family; and though she thinks favourably of my learning and morals, she considers me as wholly unacquainted with the customs of the polite part of mankind; and therefore not qualified to form the manners of a young nobleman, or communicate the knowledge of the world. This knowledge she comprises in the rules of

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visiting, the history of the present hour, an early intelligence of the change of fashions, an extensive acquaintance with the names and faces of persons of rank, and a frequent appearance in places of resort.

All this my pupil pursues with great application. He is twice a day in the Mall, where he studies the dress of every man splendid enough to attract his notice, and never comes home without some observation upon sleeves, button-holes, and embroidery. At his return from the theatre, he can give an account of the gallantries, glances, whispers, smiles, sighs, flirts, and blushes of every box, so much to his mother's satisfaction, that when I attempted to resume my character, by inquiring his opinion of the sentiments and diction of the tragedy, she at once repressed my criticism, by telling me, "that she hoped he did not go to lose his time in attending to the creatures on the stage."

But his acuteness was most eminently signalized at the masquerade, where he discovered his acquaintance through their disguises, with such wonderful facility, as has afforded the family an inexhaustible topick of conversation. Every new visitor is informed how one was detected by his gait, and another by the swinging of his arms, a third by the toss of his head, and another by his favourite phrase; nor can you doubt but these performances receive their just applause, and a genius thus hastening to maturity is promoted by every art of cultivation.

Such have been his endeavours, and such his assistances, that every trace of literature was soon obliterated. He has changed his language with his dress, and instead of endeavouring at purity or propriety, has no other care than to catch the reigning phrase and current exclamation, till, by copying whatever is peculiar in the talk of all those whose birth or fortune entitles them to imitation, he has collected every fashionable barbarism of the present winter, and speaks a dialect not to be understood among those who form their style by poring upon authors.

To this copiousness of ideas, and felicity of language, he has joined such eagerness to lead the conversation, that he

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is celebrated among the ladies as the prettiest gentleman that the age can boast of, except that some who love to talk themselves, think him too forward, and others lament that, with so much wit and knowledge, he is not taller.

His mother listens to his observations with her eyes sparkling and her heart beating, and can scarcely contain, in the most numerous assemblies, the expectations which she has formed for his future eminence. Women, by whatever fate, always judge absurdly of the intellects of boys. The vivacity and confidence which attract female admiration, are seldom produced in the early part of life, but by ignorance at least, if not by stupidity; for they proceed not from confidence of right, but fearlessness of wrong. Whoever has a clear apprehension, must have quick sensibility, and where he has no sufficient reason to trust his own judgment, will proceed with doubt and caution, because he perpetually dreads the disgrace of errour. The pain of miscarriage is naturally proportionate to the desire of excellence; and, therefore, till men are hardened by long familiarity with reproach, or have attained, by frequent struggles, the art of suppressing their emotions, diffidence is found the inseparable associate of understanding.

But so little distrust has my pupil of his own abilities, that he has for some time professed himself a wit, and tortures his imagination on all occasions for burlesque and jocularity. How he supports a character which, perhaps, no man ever assumed without repentance, may be easily conjectured. Wit, you know, is the unexpected copulation of ideas, the discovery of some occult relation between images in appearance remote from each other; an effusion of wit, therefore, presupposes an accumulation of knowledge; a memory stored with notions, which the imagination may cull out to compose new assemblages. Whatever may be the native vigour of the mind, she can never form many combinations from few ideas, as many changes can never be rung upon a few bells. Accident may indeed sometimes produce a lucky parallel or a striking con-

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trast; but these gifts of chance are not frequent, and he that has nothing of his own, and yet condemns himself to needless expenses, must live upon loans or theft.

The indulgence which his youth has hitherto obtained, and the respect which his rank secures, have hitherto supplied the want of intellectual qualifications; and he imagines that all admire who applaud, and that all who laugh are pleased. He therefore returns every day to the charge with increase of courage, though not of strength, and practises all the tricks by which wit is counterfeited. He lays trains for a quibble; he contrives blunders for his footman; he adapts old stories to present characters; he mistakes the question, that he may return a smart answer; he anticipates the argument, that he may plausibly object; when he has nothing to reply, he repeats the last words of his antagonist, then says, "your humble servant," and concludes with a laugh of triumph.

These mistakes I have honestly attempted to correct; but what can be expected from reason unsupported by fashion, splendour, or authority? He hears me, indeed, or appears to hear me, but is soon rescued from the lecture by more pleasing avocations; and shows, diversions, and caresses, drive my precepts from his remembrance.

He at last imagines himself qualified to enter the world, and has met with adventures in his first sally, which I shall, by your paper, communicate to the publick.

I am, &c.

EUMATHES.

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N°. 195. TUESDAY, JANUARY 28, 1752.

————Nescit equo rudis
Hærere ingenuus puer,
Venarique timet; ludere doctior,
Seu Græco jubeas trocho,
Seu malis vetitâ legibus aleâ. HOR. Lib. iii. Ode xxiv. 54.

Nor knows our youth, of noblest race,
To mount the manag'd steed, or urge the chace;
More skill'd in the mean arts of vice,
The whirling troque, or law-forbidden dice. FRANCIS.

TO THE RAMBLER.

SIR,

FAVOURS of every kind are doubled when they are speedily conferred. This is particularly true of the gratification of curiosity. He that long delays a story, and suffers his auditor to torment himself with expectation, will seldom be able to recompense the uneasiness, or equal the hope which he suffers to be raised.

For this reason, I have already sent you the continuation of my pupil's history, which, though it contains no events very uncommon, may be of use to young men who are in too much haste to trust their own prudence, and quit the wing of protection before they are able to shift for themselves.

When he first settled in London, he was so much bewildered in the enormous extent of the town, so confounded by incessant noise, and crowds, and hurry, and so terrified by rural narratives of the arts of sharpers, the rudeness of the populace, malignity of porters, and treachery of coachmen, that he was afraid to go beyond the door without an attendant, and imagined his life in danger if he was obliged to pass the streets at night in any vehicle but his mother's chair.

He was therefore contented, for a time, that I should accompany him in all his excursions. But his fear abated as he grew more familiar with its objects; and the contempt to which his rusticity exposed him from such of his

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companions as had accidentally known the town longer, obliged him to dissemble his remaining terrours.

His desire of liberty made him now willing to spare me the trouble of observing his motions; but knowing how much his ignorance exposed him to mischief, I thought it cruel to abandon him to the fortune of the town. We went together every day to a coffee-house, where he met wits, heirs, and fops, airy, ignorant, and thoughtless as himself, with whom he had become acquainted at card-tables, and whom he considered as the only beings to be envied or admired. What were their topicks of conversation, I could never discover; for, so much was their vivacity repressed by my intrusive seriousness, that they seldom proceeded beyond the exchange of nods and shrugs, an arch grin, or a broken hint, except when they could retire, while I was looking on the papers, to a corner of the room, where they seemed to disburden their imaginations, and commonly vented the superfluity of their sprightliness in a peal of laughter. When they had tittered themselves into negligence, I could sometimes overhear a few syllables, such as—solemn rascal—academical airs—smoke the tutor—company for gentlemen!—and other broken phrases, by which I did not suffer my quiet to be disturbed, for they never proceeded to avowed indignities, but contented themselves to murmur in secret, and, whenever I turned my eye upon them, shrunk into stillness.

He was, however, desirous of withdrawing from the subjection which he could not venture to break, and made a secret appointment to assist his companions in the persecution of a play. His footman privately procured him a catcall, on which he practised in a back-garret for two hours in the afternoon. At the proper time a chair was called; he pretended an engagement at lady Flutter's, and hastened to the place where his critical associates had assembled. They hurried away to the theatre, full of malignity and denunciations against a man whose name they had never heard, and a performance which they could not understand; for they were resolved to judge for them-

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selves, and would not suffer the town to be imposed upon by scribblers. In the pit, they exerted themselves with great spirit and vivacity; called out for the tunes of obscene songs, talked loudly at intervals of Shakespeare and Jonson, played on their catcalls a short prelude of terrour, clamoured vehemently for a prologue, and clapped with great dexterity at the first entrance of the players.

Two scenes they heard without attempting interruption; but, being no longer able to restrain their impatience, they then began to exert themselves in groans and hisses, and plied their catcalls with incessant diligence; so that they were soon considered by the audience as disturbers of the house; and some who sat near them, either provoked at the obstruction of their entertainment, or desirous to preserve the author from the mortification of seeing his hopes destroyed by children, snatched away their instruments of criticism, and, by the seasonable vibration of a stick, subdued them instantaneously to decency and silence.

To exhilarate themselves after this vexatious defeat, they posted to a tavern, where they recovered their alacrity, and, after two hours of obstreperous jollity, burst out big with enterprize, and panting for some occasion to signalize their prowess. They proceeded vigorously through two streets, and with very little opposition dispersed a rabble of drunkards less daring than themselves, then rolled two watchmen in the kennel, and broke the windows of a tavern in which the fugitives took shelter. At last it was determined to march up to a row of chairs, and demolish them for standing on the pavement; the chairmen formed a line of battle, and blows were exchanged for a time with equal courage on both sides. At last the assailants were overpowered, and the chairmen, when they knew their captives, brought them home by force.

The young gentleman, next morning, hung his head, and was so much ashamed of his outrages and defeat, that perhaps he might have been checked in his first follies, had not his mother, partly in pity of his dejection, and partly in approbation of his spirit, relieved him from his perplexity

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by paying the damages privately, and discouraging all animadversion and reproof.

This indulgence could not wholly preserve him from the remembrance of his disgrace, nor at once restore his confidence and elation. He was for three days silent, modest, and compliant, and thought himself neither too wise for instruction, nor too manly for restraint. But his levity overcame this salutary sorrow; he began to talk with his former raptures of masquerades, taverns, and frolicks; blustered when his wig was not combed with exactness; and threatened destruction to a tailor who had mistaken his directions about the pocket.

I knew that he was now rising again above control, and that his inflation of spirits would burst out into some mischievous absurdity. I therefore watched him with great attention; but one evening, having attended his mother at a visit, he withdrew himself, unsuspected, while the company was engaged at cards. His vivacity and officiousness were soon missed, and his return impatiently expected; supper was delayed, and conversation suspended; every coach that rattled through the street was expected to bring him, and every servant that entered the room was examined concerning his departure. At last the lady returned home, and was with great difficulty preserved from fits by spirits and cordials. The family was despatched a thousand ways without success, and the house was filled with distraction, till, as we were deliberating what further measures to take, he returned from a petty gaming-table, with his coat torn and his head broken; without his sword, snuff-box, sleeve-buttons, and watch.

Of this loss or robbery, he gave little account; but, instead of sinking into his former shame, endeavoured to support himself by surliness and asperity. "He was not the first that had played away a few trifles, and of what use were birth and fortune if they would not admit some sallies and expenses?" His mamma was so much provoked by the cost of this prank, that she would neither palliate nor conceal it; and his father, after some threats

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of rustication which his fondness would not suffer him to execute, reduced the allowance of his pocket, that he might not be tempted by plenty to profusion. This method would have succeeded in a place where there are no panders to folly and extravagance, but was now likely to have produced pernicious consequences; for we have discovered a treaty with a broker, whose daughter he seems disposed to marry, on condition that he shall be supplied with present money, for which he is to repay thrice the value at the death of his father.

There was now no time to be lost. A domestick consultation was immediately held, and he was doomed to pass two years in the country; but his mother, touched with his tears, declared, that she thought him too much of a man to be any longer confined to his book, and he therefore begins his travels to-morrow under a French governour.

I am, &c.

EUMATHES.

N°. 196. SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 1, 1752.

Multa ferunt anni venientes commoda secum,
Multa recedentes adimunt.—— Hor. De Ar. Poet. 175.

The blessings flowing in with life's full tide,
Down with our ebb of life decreasing glide. FRANCIS.

BAXTER, in the narrative of his own life, has enumerated several opinions, which, though he thought them evident and incontestable at his first entrance into the world, time and experience disposed him to change.

Whoever reviews the state of his own mind from the dawn of manhood to its decline, and considers what he pursued or dreaded, slighted or esteemed, at different periods of his age, will have no reason to imagine such changes of sentiment peculiar to any station or character. Every man, however careless and inattentive, has conviction forced upon him; the lectures of time obtrude themselves upon the most unwilling or dissipated auditor;

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and, by comparing our past with our present thoughts, we perceive that we have changed our minds, though perhaps we cannot discover when the alteration happened, or by what causes it was produced.

This revolution of sentiments occasions a perpetual contest between the old and young. They who imagine themselves entitled to veneration by the prerogative of longer life, are inclined to treat the notions of those whose conduct they superintend with superciliousness and contempt, for want of considering that the future and the past have different appearances; that the disproportion will always be great between expectation and enjoyment, between new possession and satiety; that the truth of many maxims of age gives too little pleasure to be allowed till it is felt; and that the miseries of life would be increased beyond all human power of endurance, if we were to enter the world with the same opinions as we carry from it.

We naturally indulge those ideas that please us. Hope will predominate in every mind, till it has been suppressed by frequent disappointments. The youth has not yet discovered how many evils are continually hovering about us, and when he is set free from the shackles of discipline, looks abroad into the world with rapture; he sees an elysian region open before him, so variegated with beauty, and so stored with pleasure, that his care is rather to accumulate good, than to shun evil; he stands distracted by different forms of delight, and has no other doubt, than which path to follow of those which all lead equally to the bowers of happiness.

He who has seen only the superficies of life believes every thing to be what it appears, and rarely suspects that external splendour conceals any latent sorrow or vexation. He never imagines that there may be greatness without safety, affluence without content, jollity without friendship, and solitude without peace. He fancies himself permitted to cull the blessings of every condition, and to leave its inconveniencies to the idle and the ignorant. He is inclined to believe no man miserable but by his own fault,

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and seldom looks with much pity upon failings or miscarriages, because he thinks them willingly admitted, or negligently incurred.

It is impossible, without pity and contempt, to hear a youth of generous sentiments and warm imagination, declaring, in the moment of openness and confidence, his designs and expectations; because long life is possible, he considers it as certain, and therefore promises himself all the changes of happiness, and provides gratifications for every desire. He is, for a time, to give himself wholly to frolick and diversion, to range the world in search of pleasure, to delight every eye, to gain every heart, and to be celebrated equally for his pleasing levities and solid attainments, his deep reflections and his sparkling repartees. He then elevates his views to nobler enjoyments, and finds all the scattered excellencies of the female world united in a woman, who prefers his addresses to wealth and titles; he is afterwards to engage in business, to dissipate difficulty, and overpower opposition: to climb, by the mere force of merit, to fame and greatness; and reward all those who countenanced his rise, or paid due regard to his early excellence. At last he will retire in peace and honour; contract his views to domestick pleasures; form the manners of children like himself; observe how every year expands the beauty of his daughters, and how his sons catch ardour from their father's history; he will give laws to the neighbourhood; dictate axioms to posterity; and leave the world an example of wisdom and of happiness.

With hopes like these, he sallies jocund into life; to little purpose is he told, that the condition of humanity admits no pure and unmingled happiness; that the exuberant gaiety of youth ends in poverty or disease; that uncommon qualifications and contrarieties of excellence, produce envy equally with applause; that whatever admiration and fondness may promise him, he must marry a wife like the wives of others, with some virtues and some faults, and be as often disgusted by her vices, as delighted

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by her elegance; that if he adventures into the circle of action, he must expect to encounter men as artful, as daring, as resolute as himself; that of his children, some may be deformed, and others vicious; some may disgrace him by their follies, some offend him by their insolence, and some exhaust him by their profusion. He hears all this with obstinate incredulity, and wonders by what malignity old age is influenced, that it cannot forbear to fill his ears with predictions of misery.

Among other pleasing errours of young minds, is the opinion of their own importance. He that has not yet remarked, how little attention his contemporaries can spare from their own affairs, conceives all eyes turned upon himself, and imagines every one that approaches him to be an enemy or a follower, an admirer or a spy. He therefore considers his fame as involved in the event of every action. Many of the virtues and vices of youth proceed from this quick sense of reputation. This it is that gives firmness and constancy, fidelity, and disinterestedness, and it is this that kindles resentment for slight injuries, and dictates all the principles of sanguinary honour.

But as time brings him forward into the world, he soon discovers that he only shares fame or reproach with innumerable partners; that he is left unmarked in the obscurity of the crowd; and that what he does, whether good or bad, soon gives way to new objects of regard. He then easily sets himself free from the anxieties of reputation, and considers praise or censure as a transient breath, which, while he hears it, is passing away, without any lasting mischief or advantage.

In youth, it is common to measure right and wrong by the opinion of the world, and, in age, to act without any measure but interest, and to lose shame without substituting virtue.

Such is the condition of life, that something is always wanting to happiness. In youth, we have warm hopes, which are soon blasted by rashness and negligence, and

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great designs, which are defeated by inexperience. In age, we have knowledge and prudence without spirit to exert, or motives to prompt them; we are able to plan schemes and regulate measures, but have not time remaining to bring them to completion.

N°. 197. TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 4, 1752.

Cujus vulturis hoc erit cadaver? MART. Lib. vi. Ep. lxii. 4.

Say, to what vulture's share this carcase falls? F. LEWIS

TO THE RAMBLER.

SIR,

I BELONG to an order of mankind, considerable at least for their number, to which your notice has never been formally extended, though equally entitled to regard with those triflers, who have hitherto supplied you with topicks of amusement or instruction. I am, Mr. Rambler, a legacy-hunter; and, as every man is willing to think well of the tribe in which his name is registered, you will forgive my vanity, if I remind you that the legacy-hunter, however degraded by an ill-compounded appellation in our barbarous language, was known, as I am told, in ancient Rome, by the sonorous titles of Captator and Hæredipeta.

My father was an attorney in the country, who married his master's daughter in hopes of a fortune which he did not obtain, having been, as he afterwards discovered, chosen by her only because she had no better offer, and was afraid of service. I was the first offspring of a marriage, thus reciprocally fraudulent, and therefore could not be expected to inherit much dignity or generosity, and if I had them not from nature, was not likely ever to attain them; for, in the years which I spent at home, I never heard any reason for action or forbearance, but that we should gain money or lose it; nor was taught any other style of commendation, than that Mr. Sneaker is a warm

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man, Mr. Gripe has done his business, and needs care for nobody.

My parents, though otherwise not great philosophers, knew the force of early education, and took care that the blank of my understanding should be filled with impressions of the value of money. My mother used, upon all occasions, to inculcate some salutary axioms, such as might incite me *to keep what I had, and get what I could*; she informed me that we were in a world, where *all must catch that catch can*; and as I grew up, stored my memory with deeper observations; restrained me from the usual puerile expenses, by remarking that *many a little made a mickle*; and, when I envied the finery of my neighbours, told me that *brag was a good dog, but holdfast was a better.*

I was soon sagacious enough to discover that I was not born to great wealth; and having heard no other name for happiness, was sometimes inclined to repine at my condition. But my mother always relieved me, by saying, that there was money enough in the family, that *it was good to be of kin to means*, that I had nothing to do but to please my friends, and I might come to hold up my head with the best squire in the country.

These splendid expectations arose from our alliance to three persons of considerable fortune. My mother's aunt had attended on a lady, who, when she died, rewarded her officiousness and fidelity with a large legacy. My father had two relations, of whom one had broken his indentures and run to sea, from whence, after an absence of thirty years, he returned with ten thousand pounds; and the other had lured an heiress out of a window, who, dying of her first child, had left him her estate, on which he lived, without any other care than to collect his rents, and preserve from poachers that game which he could not kill himself.

These hoarders of money were visited and courted by all who had any pretence to approach them, and received presents and compliments from cousins who could scarcely

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tell the degree of their relation. But we had peculiar advantages, which encouraged us to hope, that we should by degrees supplant our competitors. My father, by his profession, made himself necessary in their affairs; for the sailor and the chambermaid, he inquired out mortgages and securities, and wrote bonds and contracts; and had endeared himself to the old woman, who once rashly lent an hundred pounds without consulting him, by informing her, that her debtor, was on the point of bankruptcy, and posting so expeditiously with an execution, that all the other creditors were defrauded.

To the squire he was a kind of steward, and had distinguished himself in his office by his address in raising the rents, his inflexibility in distressing the tardy tenants, and his acuteness in setting the parish free from burdensome inhabitants, by shifting them off to some other settlement.

Business made frequent attendance necessary; trust soon produced intimacy; and success gave a claim to kindness; so that we had opportunity to practise all the arts of flattery and endearment. My mother, who could not support the thoughts of losing any thing, determined, that all their fortunes should centre in me; and, in the prosecution of her schemes, took care to inform me that *nothing cost less than good words*, and that it is comfortable to leap into an estate which another has got.

She trained me by these precepts to the utmost ductility of obedience, and the closest attention to profit. At an age when other boys are sporting in the fields or murmuring in the school, I was contriving some new method of paying my court; inquiring the age of my future benefactors; or considering how I should employ their legacies.

If our eagerness of money could have been satisfied with the possessions of any one of my relations, they might perhaps have been obtained; but as it was impossible to be always present with all three, our competitors were busy to efface any trace of affection which we might have left behind; and since there was not, on any part, such superiority of merit as could enforce a constant and unshaken

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preference, whoever was the last that flattered or obliged, had, for a time, the ascendant.

My relations maintained a regular exchange of courtesy, took care to miss no occasion of condolence or congratulation, and sent presents at stated times, but had in their hearts not much esteem for one another. The seaman looked with contempt upon the squire as a milksop and a landman, who had lived without knowing the points of the compass, or seeing any part of the world beyond the county-town; and whenever they met, would talk of longitude and latitude, and circles and tropicks, would scarcely tell him the hour without some mention of the horizon and meridian, nor shew him the news without detecting his ignorance of the situation of other countries.

The squire considered the sailor as a rude uncultivated savage, with little more of human than his form, and diverted himself with his ignorance of all common objects and affairs; when he could persuade him to go into the field, he always exposed him to the sportsmen, by sending him to look for game in improper places; and once prevailed upon him to be present at the races, only that he might shew the gentlemen how a sailor sat upon a horse.

The old gentlewoman thought herself wiser than both, for she lived with no servant but a maid, and saved her money. The others were indeed sufficiently frugal; but the squire could not live without dogs and horses, and the sailor never suffered the day to pass but over a bowl of punch, to which, as he was not critical in the choice of his company, every man was welcome that could roar out a catch, or tell a story.

All these, however, I was to please; an arduous task; but what will not youth and avarice undertake? I had an unresisting suppleness of temper, and an insatiable wish for riches; I was perpetually instigated by the ambition of my parents, and assisted occasionally by their instructions. What these advantages enabled me to perform, shall be told in the next letter of,

Yours, &c. CAPTATOR.

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N°. 198. SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 8, 1752.

Nil mihi das vivus: dicis, post fata daturum.
Si non es stultus, scis, Maro, quid cupiam. MART. Lib. xi. 67.

You've told me, Maro, whilst you live,
You'd not a single penny give,
But that whene'er you chance to die,
You'd leave a handsome legacy:
You must be mad beyond redress,
If my next wish you cannot guess. F. LEWIS.

MR. RAMBLER.

SIR,

You, who must have observed the inclination which almost every man, however unactive or insignificant, discovers of representing his life as distinguished by extraordinary events, will not wonder that Captator thinks his narrative important enough to be continued. Nothing is more common than for those to tease their companions with their history, who have neither done nor suffered any thing that can excite curiosity, or afford instruction.

As I was taught to flatter with the first essays of speech, and had very early lost every other passion in the desire of money, I began my pursuit with omens of success; for I divided my officiousness so judiciously among my relations, that I was equally the favourite of all. When any of them entered the door, I went to welcome him with raptures; when he went away, I hung down my head, and sometimes entreated to go with him with so much importunity, that I very narrowly escaped a consent which I dreaded in my heart. When at an annual entertainment they were altogether, I had a harder task; but plied them so impartially with caresses, that none could charge me with neglect; and when they were wearied with my fondness and civilities, I was always dismissed with money to buy playthings.

Life cannot be kept at a stand: the years of innocence and prattle were soon at an end, and other qualifications

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were necessary to recommend me to continuance of kindness. It luckily happened that none of my friends had high notions of book-learning. The sailor hated to see tall boys shut up in a school, when they might more properly be seeing the world, and making their fortunes; and was of opinion, that when the first rules of arithmetick were known, all that was necessary to make a man complete might be learned on ship-board. The squire only insisted, that so much scholarship was indispensably necessary, as might confer ability to draw a lease and read the court hands; and the old chambermaid declared loudly her contempt of books, and her opinion that they only took the head off the main chance.

To unite, as well as we could, all their systems, I was bred at home. Each was taught to believe, that I followed his directions, and I gained likewise, as my mother observed, this advantage, that I was always in the way; for she had known many favourite children sent to schools or academies, and forgotten.

As I grew fitter to be trusted to my own discretion, I was often despatched upon various pretences to visit my relations, with directions from my parents how to ingratiate myself, and drive away competitors.

I was, from my infancy, considered by the sailor as a promising genius, because I liked punch better than wine; and I took care to improve this prepossession by continual inquiries about the art of navigation, the degree of heat and cold in different climates, the profits of trade, and the dangers of shipwreck. I admired the courage of the seamen, and gained his heart by importuning him for a recital of his adventures, and a sight of his foreign curiosities. I listened with an appearance of close attention to stories which I could already repeat, and at the close never failed to express my resolution to visit distant countries, and my contempt of the cowards and drones that spend all their lives in their native parish; though I had in reality no desire of any thing but money, nor ever felt the stimulations of curiosity or ardour of adventure, but would contentedly

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have passed the years of Nestor in receiving rents, and lending upon mortgages.

The squire I was able to please with less hypocrisy, for I really thought it pleasant enough to kill the game and eat it. Some arts of falsehood, however, the hunger of gold persuaded me to practise, by which, though no other mischief was produced, the purity of my thoughts was vitiated, and the reverence for truth gradually destroyed. I sometimes purchased fish, and pretended to have caught them; I hired the countrymen to shew me partridges, and then gave my uncle intelligence of their haunt; I learned the seats of hares at night, and discovered them in the morning with a sagacity that raised the wonder and envy of old sportsmen. One only obstruction to the advancement of my reputation I could never fully surmount; I was naturally a coward, and was therefore always left shamefully behind, when there was a necessity to leap a hedge, to swim a river, or force the horses to the utmost speed; but as these exigencies did not frequently happen, I maintained my honour with sufficient success, and was never left out of a hunting party.

The old chambermaid was not so certainly, nor so easily pleased, for she had no predominant passion but avarice, and was therefore cold and inaccessible. She had no conception of any virtue in a young man but that of saving his money. When she heard of my exploits in the field, she would shake her head, inquire how much I should be the richer for all my performances, and lament that such sums should be spent upon dogs and horses. If the sailor told her of my inclination to travel, she was sure there was no place like England, and could not imagine why any man that can live in his own country should leave it. This sullen and frigid being I found means, however, to propitiate by frequent commendations of frugality, and perpetual care to avoid expense.

From the sailor was our first and most considerable expectation; for he was richer than the chambermaid, and older than the squire. He was so awkward and bashful

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among women, that we concluded him secure from matrimony; and the noisy fondness with which he used to welcome me to his house, made us imagine that he would look out for no other heir, and that we had nothing to do but wait patiently for his death. But in the midst of our triumph, my uncle saluted us one morning with a cry of transport, and, clapping his hand hard on my shoulder, told me, I was a happy fellow to have a friend like him in the world, for he came to fit me out for a voyage with one of his old acquaintances. I turned pale, and trembled; my father told him, that he believed my constitution not fitted to the sea; and my mother, bursting into tears, cried out, that her heart would break if she lost me. All this had no effect; the sailor was wholly insusceptive of the softer passions, and, without regard to tears or arguments, persisted in his resolution to make me a man.

We were obliged to comply in appearance, and preparations were accordingly made. I took leave of my friends with great alacrity, proclaimed the beneficence of my uncle with the highest strains of gratitude, and rejoiced at the opportunity now put into my hands of gratifying my thirst of knowledge. But, a week before the day appointed for my departure, I fell sick by my mother's direction, and refused all food but what she privately brought me; whenever my uncle visited me I was lethargick or delirious, but took care in my raving fits to talk incessantly of travel and merchandize. The room was kept dark; the table was filled with vials and gallipots; my mother was with difficulty persuaded not to endanger her life with nocturnal attendance; my father lamented the loss of the profits of the voyage; and such superfluity of artifices was employed, as perhaps might have discovered the cheat to a man of penetration. But the sailor, unacquainted with subtilties and stratagems, was easily deluded; and as the ship could not stay for my recovery, sold the cargo, and left me to re-establish my health at leisure.

I was sent to regain my flesh in a purer air, lest it

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should appear never to have been wasted, and in two months returned to deplore my disappointment. My uncle pitied my dejection, and bid me prepare myself against next year, for no land-lubber should touch his money.

A reprieve however was obtained, and perhaps some new stratagem might have succeeded another spring; but my uncle unhappily made amorous advances to my mother's maid, who, to promote so advantageous a match, discovered the secret with which only she had been entrusted. He stormed, and raved, and declaring that he would have heirs of his own, and not give his substance to cheats and cowards, married the girl in two days, and has now four children.

Cowardice is always scorned, and deceit universally detested. I found my friends, if not wholly alienated, at least cooled in their affection; the squire, though he did not wholly discard me, was less fond, and often inquired when I would go to sea. I was obliged to bear his insults, and endeavoured to rekindle his kindness by assiduity and respect; but all my care was vain; he died without a will, and the estate devolved to the legal heir.

Thus has the folly of my parents condemned me to spend in flattery and attendance those years in which I might have been qualified to place myself above hope or fear. I am arrived at manhood without any useful art, or generous sentiment; and, if the old woman should likewise at last deceive me, am in danger at once of beggary and ignorance.

I am, &c.

CAPTATOR.

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N°. 199. TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 11, 1752.

Decolor, obscurus, vilis. Non ille reperam
Cæsariem Regum, nec candida virginis ornat
Colla, nec insigni splendet per cingula morsu:
Sed nova si nigri videas miracula saxi,
Tum pulcros superat cultus, et quidquid Eois
Indus litoribus rubra scrutatur in alga. CLAUDIANUS, xlviii. 10.

Obscure, unpris'd, and dark, the magnet lies,
Nor lures the search of avaricious eyes,
Nor binds the neck, nor sparkles in the hair,
Nor dignifies the great, nor decks the fair.
But search the wonders of the dusky stone,
And own all glories of the mine outdone,
Each grace of form, each ornament of state,
That decks the fair, or dignifies the great.

TO THE RAMBLER.

SIR,

THOUGH you have seldom digressed from moral subjects, I suppose you are not so rigorous or cynical as to deny the value or usefulness of natural philosophy; or to have lived in this age of inquiry and experiment, without any attention to the wonders every day produced by the pokers of magnetism and the wheels of electricity. At least, I may be allowed to hope that, since nothing is more contrary to moral excellence than envy, you will not refuse to promote the happiness of others, merely because you cannot partake of their enjoyments.

In confidence, therefore, that your ignorance has not made you an enemy to knowledge, I offer you the honour of introducing to the notice of the publick, an adept, who, having long laboured for the benefit of mankind, is not willing, like too many of his predecessors, to conceal his secrets in the grave.

Many have signalized themselves by melting their estates in crucibles. I was born to no fortune, and therefore had only my mind and body to devote to knowledge, and the gratitude of posterity will attest, that neither mind nor body have been spared. I have sat whole weeks without

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sleep by the side of an athanor, to watch the moment of projection; I have made the first experiment in nineteen diving engines of new construction; I have fallen eleven times speechless under the shock of electricity; I have twice dislocated my limbs, and once fractured my skull, in essaying to fly[1]; and four times endangered my life by submitting to the transfusion of blood.

In the first period of my studies, I exerted the powers of my body more than those of my mind, and was not without hopes that fame might be purchased by a few broken bones without the toil of thinking; but having been shattered by some violent experiments, and constrained to confine myself to my books, I passed six-and-thirty years in searching the treasures of ancient wisdom, but am at last amply recompensed for all my perseverance.

The curiosity of the present race of philosophers, having been long exercised upon electricity, has been lately transferred to magnetism; the qualities of the loadstone have been investigated, if not with much advantage, yet with great applause; and as the highest praise of art is to imitate nature, I hope no man will think the makers of artificial magnets celebrated or reverenced above their deserts.

I have, for some time, employed myself in the same practice, but with deeper knowledge and more extensive views. While my contemporaries were touching needles and raising weights, or busying themselves with inclination and variation, I have been examining those qualities of magnetism which may be applied to the accommodation and happiness of common life. I have left to inferiour understandings the care of conducting the sailor through the hazards of the ocean, and reserved to myself the more difficult and illustrious province of preserving the connubial compact from violation, and setting mankind free for ever from the

[1] In the sixth chapter of Rasselas we have an excellent story of an experimentalist in the art of flying. Dr. Johnson sketched perhaps from life, for we are informed that he once lodged in the same house with a man who broke his legs in the daring attempt.

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danger of supposititious children, and the torments of fruitless vigilance and anxious suspicion.

To defraud any man of his due praise is unworthy of a philosopher; I shall, therefore, openly confess that I owe the first hint of this inestimable secret to the rabbi Abraham Ben Hannase, who, in his treatise of precious stones, has left this account of the magnet: הקאלאמיטא, &c. "The calamita, or loadstone that attracts iron, produces many bad fantasies in man. Women fly from this stone. If, therefore, any husband be disturbed with jealousy, and fear lest his wife converses with other men, let him lay this stone upon her while she is asleep. If she be pure, she will, when she wakes, clasp her husband fondly in her arms; but if she be guilty, she will fall out of bed, and run away."

When I first read this wonderful passage, I could not easily conceive why it had remained hitherto unregarded in such a zealous competition for magnetical fame. It would surely be unjust to suspect that any of the candidates are strangers to the name or works of rabbi Abraham, or to conclude, from a late edict of the Royal Society in favour of the English language, that philosophy and literature are no longer to act in concert. Yet, how should a quality so useful escape promulgation, but by the obscurity of the language in which it was delivered? Why are footmen and chambermaids paid on every side for keeping secrets, which no caution nor expense could secure from the all-penetrating magnet? Or, why are so many witnesses summoned, and so many artifices practised, to discover what so easy an experiment would infallibly reveal?

Full of this perplexity, I read the lines of Abraham to a friend, who advised me not to expose my life by a mad indulgence of the love of fame: he warned me by the fate of Orpheus, that knowledge or genius could give no protection to the invader of female prerogatives; assured me that neither the armour of Achilles, nor the antidote of Mithridates, would be able to preserve me; and counselled me, if I could not live without renown, to attempt the ac-

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quisition of universal empire, in which the honour would perhaps be equal, and the danger certainly be less.

I, a solitary student, pretend not to much knowledge of the world, but am unwilling to think it so generally corrupt, as that a scheme for the detection of incontinence should bring any danger upon its inventor. My friend has indeed told me that all the women will be my enemies, and that, however I flatter myself with hopes of defence from the men, I shall certainly find myself deserted in the hour of danger. Of the young men, said he, some will be afraid of sharing the disgrace of their mothers, and some the danger of their mistresses; of those who are married, part are already convinced of the falsehood of their wives, and part shut their eyes to avoid conviction; few ever sought for virtue in marriage, and therefore few will try whether they have found it. Almost every man is careless or timorous, and to trust is easier and safer than to examine.

These observations discouraged me, till I began to consider what reception I was likely to find among the ladies, whom I have reviewed under the three classes of maids, wives, and widows, and cannot but hope that I may obtain some countenance among them. The single ladies I suppose universally ready to patronise my method, by which connubial wickedness may be detected, since no woman marries with a previous design to be unfaithful to her husband. And to keep them steady in my cause, I promise never to sell one of my magnets to a man who steals a girl from school; marries a woman of forty years younger than himself; or employs the authority of parents to obtain a wife without her own consent.

Among the married ladies, notwithstanding the insinuations of slander, yet I resolve to believe, that the greater part are my friends, and am at least convinced, that they who demand the test, and appear on my side, will supply, by their spirit, the deficiency of their numbers, and that their enemies will shrink and quake at the sight of a magnet, as the slaves of Scythia fled from the scourge.

The widows will be confederated in my favour by their

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curiosity, if not by their virtue; for it may be observed, that women who have outlived their husbands, always think themselves entitled to superintend the conduct of young wives; and as they are themselves in no danger from this magnetick trial, I shall expect them to be eminently and unanimously zealous in recommending it.

With these hopes I shall, in a short time, offer to sale magnets armed with a particular metallick composition, which concentrates their virtue, and determines their agency. It is known that the efficacy of the magnet, in common operations, depends much upon its armature, and it cannot be imagined, that a stone, naked, or cased only in a common manner, will discover the virtues ascribed to it by Rabbi Abraham. The secret of this metal I shall carefully conceal, and, therefore, am not afraid of imitators, nor shall trouble the offices with solicitations for a patent.

I shall sell them of different sizes, and various degrees of strength. I have some of a bulk proper to be hung at the bed's head, as scare-crows, and some so small that they may be easily concealed. Some I have ground into oval forms to be hung at watches; and some, for the curious, I have set in wedding rings, that ladies may never want an attestation of their innocence. Some I can produce so sluggish and inert, that they will not act before the third failure; and others so vigorous and animated, that they exert their influence against unlawful wishes, if they have been willingly and deliberately indulged. As it is my practice honestly to tell my customers the properties of my magnets, I can judge, by their choice, of the delicacy of their sentiments. Many have been content to spare cost by purchasing only the lowest degree of efficacy, and all have started with terrour from those which operate upon the thoughts. One young lady only fitted on a ring of the strongest energy, and declared that she scorned to separate her wishes from her acts, or allow herself to think what she was forbidden to practise.

I am, &c.

HERMETICUS.

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N°. 200. SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 15, 1752.

Nemo petit, modicis quæ mittebantur amicis
A Seneca, quæ Piso bonus, quæ Cotta solebat
Largiri; namque et titulis, et fascibus olim
Major habebatur donandi gloria: solum
Poscimus, ut cœnes civiliter. Hoc face, et esto,
Esto, ut nunc multi, dives tibi, pauper amicis. Juv. Sat. v. 108.

No man expects (for who so much a sot
Who has the times he lives in so forgot?)
What Seneca, what Piso us'd to send,
To raise or to support a sinking friend.
Those godlike men, to wanting virtue kind,
Bounty well plac'd, preferr'd, and well design'd,
To all their titles, all that height of pow'r,
Which turns the brains of fools, and fools alone adore.
When your poor client is condemn'd t' attend,
'Tis all we ask, receive him as a friend:
Descend to this, and then we ask no more;
Rich to yourself, to all beside be poor. Bowles.

TO THE RAMBLER.

MR. RAMBLER,

SUCH is the tenderness or infirmity of many minds, that when any affliction oppresses them, they have immediate recourse to lamentation and complaint, which, though it can only be allowed reasonable when evils admit of remedy, and then only when addressed to those from whom the remedy is expected, yet seems even in hopeless and incurable distresses to be natural, since those by whom it is not indulged, imagine that they give a proof of extraordinary fortitude by suppressing it.

I am one of those who, with the Sancho of Cervantes, leave to higher characters the merit of suffering in silence, and give vent without scruple to any sorrow that swells in my heart. It is therefore to me a severe aggravation of a calamity, when it is such as in the common opinion will not justify the acerbity of exclamation, or support the solemnity of vocal grief. Yet many pains are incident to a man of delicacy, which the unfeeling world cannot be persuaded to pity, and which, when they are separated

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from their peculiar and personal circumstances, will never be considered as important enough to claim attention, or deserve redress.

Of this kind will appear to gross and vulgar apprehensions, the miseries which I endured in a morning visit to Prospero, a man lately raised to wealth by a lucky project, and too much intoxicated by sudden elevation, or too little polished by thought and conversation, to enjoy his present fortune with elegance and decency.

We set out in the world together; and for a long time mutually assisted each other in our exigencies, as either happened to have money or influence beyond his immediate necessities. You know that nothing generally endears men so much as participation of dangers and misfortunes; I therefore always considered Prospero as united with me in the strongest league of kindness, and imagined that our friendship was only to be broken by the hand of death. I felt at his sudden shoot of success an honest and disinterested joy; but as I want no part of his superfluities, am not willing to descend from that equality in which we hitherto have lived.

Our intimacy was regarded by me as a dispensation from ceremonial visits; and it was so long before I saw him at his new house, that he gently complained of my neglect, and obliged me to come on a day appointed. I kept my promise, but found that the impatience of my friend arose not from any desire to communicate his happiness, but to enjoy his superiority.

When I told my name at the door, the footman went to see if his master was at home, and, by the tardiness of his return, gave me reason to suspect that time was taken to deliberate. He then informed me, that Prospero desired my company, and shewed the staircase carefully secured by mats from the pollution of my feet. The best apartments were ostentatiously set open, that I might have a distant view of the magnificence which I was not permitted to approach; and my old friend receiving me with all the insolence of condescension at the top of the

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stairs, conducted me to a back room, where he told me he always breakfasted when he had not great company.

On the floor where we sat lay a carpet covered with a cloth, of which Prospero ordered his servant to lift up a corner, that I might contemplate the brightness of the colours, and the elegance of the texture, and asked me whether I had ever seen any thing so fine before? I did not gratify his folly with any outcries of admiration, but coldly bade the footman let down the cloth.

We then sat down, and I began to hope that pride was glutted with persecution, when Prospero desired that I would give the servant leave to adjust the cover of my chair, which was slipt a little aside, to shew the damask; he informed me that he had bespoke ordinary chairs for common use, but had been disappointed by his tradesman. I put the chair aside with my foot, and drew another so hastily, that I was entreated not to rumple the carpet.

Breakfast was at last set, and as I was not willing to indulge the peevishness that began to seize me, I commended the tea: Prospero then told me, that another time I should taste his finest sort, but that he had only a very small quantity remaining, and reserved it for those whom he thought himself obliged to treat with particular respect.

While we were conversing upon such subjects as imagination happened to suggest, he frequently digressed into directions to the servant that waited, or made a slight inquiry after the jeweller or silversmith; and once, as I was pursuing an argument with some degree of earnestness, he started from his posture of attention, and ordered, that if lord Lofty called on him that morning, he should be shown into the best parlour.

My patience was yet not wholly subdued. I was willing to promote his satisfaction, and therefore observed that the figures on the china were eminently pretty. Prospero had now an opportunity of calling for his Dresden china, which, says he, I always associate with my chased tea-kettle. The cups were brought; I once resolved not to

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have looked upon them, but my curiosity prevailed. When I had examined them a little, Prospero desired me to set them down, for they who were accustomed only to common dishes, seldom handled china with much care. You will, I hope, commend my philosophy, when I tell you that I did not dash his baubles to the ground.

He was now so much elevated with his own greatness, that he thought some humility necessary to avert the glance of envy, and therefore told me, with an air of soft composure, that I was not to estimate life by external appearance, that all these shining acquisitions had added little to his happiness, that he still remembered with pleasure the days in which he and I were upon the level, and had often, in the moment of reflection, been doubtful, whether he should lose much by changing his condition for mine.

I began now to be afraid lest his pride should, by silence and submission be emboldened to insults that could not easily be borne, and therefore coolly considered, how I should repress it without such bitterness of reproof as I was yet unwilling to use. But he interrupted my meditation, by asking leave to be dressed, and told me, that he had promised to attend some ladies in the park, and, if I was going the same way, would take me in his chariot. I had no inclination to any other favours, and therefore left him without any intention of seeing him again, unless some misfortune should restore his understanding.

I am, &c.

ASPER.

Though I am not wholly insensible of the provocations which my correspondent has received, I cannot altogether commend the keenness of his resentment, nor encourage him to persist in his resolution of breaking off all commerce with his old acquaintance. One of the golden precepts of Pythagoras directs, that *a friend should not be hated for little faults*; and surely he, upon whom nothing worse can be charged, than that he mats his stairs, and

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covers his carpet, and sets out his finery to show before those whom he does not admit to use it, has yet committed nothing that should exclude him from common degrees of kindness. Such improprieties often proceed rather from stupidity than malice. Those who thus shine only to dazzle, are influenced merely by custom and example, and neither examine, nor are qualified to examine, the motives of their own practice, or to state the nice limits between elegance and ostentation. They are often innocent of the pain which their vanity produces, and insult others when they have no worse purpose than to please themselves.

He that too much refines his delicacy will always endanger his quiet. Of those with whom nature and virtue oblige us to converse, some are ignorant of the art of pleasing, and offend when they design to caress; some are negligent, and gratify themselves without regard to the quiet of another; some, perhaps, are malicious, and feel no greater satisfaction in prosperity, than that of raising envy and trampling inferiority. But, whatever be the motive of insult, it is always best to overlook it, for folly scarcely can deserve resentment, and malice is punished by neglect [m].

[m] Garrick's little vanities are recognized by all in the character of Prospero. Mr. Boswell informs us, that he never forgave its pointed satire. On the same authority we are assured, that though Johnson so dearly loved to ridicule his pupil, yet he so habitually considered him as his own property, that he would permit no one beside to hold up his weaknesses to derision.

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N°. 201. TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 18, 1752.

——— *Sanctus haberi*
Justitiæque tenax factis dictisque mereris,
Adnosco procerem. JUV. Sat. Lib. viii. 24.

Convince the world that you're devout and true;
Be just in all you say, and all you do;
Whatever be your birth, you're sure to be
A peer of the first magnitude to me. STEPNEY.

BOYLE has observed, that the excellency of manufactures, and the facility of labour, would be much promoted, if the various expedients and contrivances which lie concealed in private hands, were by reciprocal communications made generally known; for there are few operations that are not performed by one or other with some peculiar advantages, which, though singly of little importance, would, by conjunction and concurrence, open new inlets to knowledge, and give new powers to diligence.

There are, in like manner, several moral excellencies distributed among the different classes of a community. It was said by Cujacius, that he never read more than one book by which he was not instructed; and he that shall inquire after virtue with ardour and attention, will seldom find a man by whose example or sentiments he may not be improved.

Every profession has some essential and appropriate virtue, without which there can be no hope of honour or success, and which, as it is more or less cultivated, confers within its sphere of activity different degrees of merit and reputation. As the astrologers range the subdivisions of mankind under the planets which they suppose to influence their lives, the moralist may distribute them according to the virtues which they necessarily practise, and consider them as distinguished by prudence or fortitude, diligence or patience.

So much are the modes of excellence settled by time and place, that men may be heard boasting in one street

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of that which they would anxiously conceal in another. The grounds of scorn and esteem, the topicks of praise and satire, are varied according to the several virtues or vices which the course of life has disposed men to admire or abhor; but he who is solicitous for his own improvement, must not be limited by local reputation, but select from every tribe of mortals their characteristical virtues, and constellate in himself the scattered graces which shine single in other men.

The chief praise to which a trader aspires is that of punctuality, or an exact and rigorous observance of commercial engagements; nor is there any vice of which he so much dreads the imputation, as of negligence and instability. This is a quality which the interest of mankind requires to be diffused through all the ranks of life, but which many seem to consider as a vulgar and ignoble virtue, below the ambition of greatness or attention of wit, scarcely requisite among men of gaiety and spirit, and sold at its highest rate when it is sacrificed to a frolick or a jest.

Every man has daily occasion to remark what vexations arise from this privilege of deceiving one another. The active and vivacious have so long disdained the restraints of truth, that promises and appointments have lost their cogency, and both parties neglect their stipulations, because each concludes that they will be broken by the other.

Negligence is first admitted in small affairs, and strengthened by petty indulgences. He that is not yet hardened by custom, ventures not on the violation of important engagements, but thinks himself bound by his word in cases of property or danger, though he allows himself to forget at what time he is to meet ladies in the park, or at what tavern his friends are expecting him.

This laxity of honour would be more tolerable, if it could be restrained to the play-house, the ball-room, or the card-table; yet even there it is sufficiently troublesome, and darkens those moments with expectation, suspense, and

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resentment, which are set aside for pleasure, and from which we naturally hope for unmingled enjoyment, and total relaxation. But he that suffers the slightest breach in his morality, can seldom tell what shall enter it, or how wide it shall be made; when a passage is open, the influx of corruption is every moment wearing down opposition, and by slow degrees deluges the heart.

Aliger entered the world a youth of lively imagination, extensive views, and untainted principles. His curiosity incited him to range from place to place, and try all the varieties of conversation; his elegance of address and fertility of ideas gained him friends wherever he appeared; or at least he found the general kindness of reception always shown to a young man whose birth and fortune give him a claim to notice, and who has neither by vice nor folly destroyed his privileges. Aliger was pleased with this general smile of mankind, and was industrious to preserve it by compliance and officiousness, but did not suffer his desire of pleasing to vitiate his integrity. It was his established maxim, that a promise is never to be broken; nor was it without long reluctance that he once suffered himself to be drawn away from a festal engagement by the importunity of another company.

He spent the evening, as is usual in the rudiments of vice, in perturbation and imperfect enjoyment, and met his disappointed friends in the morning with confusion and excuses. His companions, not accustomed to such scrupulous anxiety, laughed at his uneasiness, compounded the offence for a bottle, gave him courage to break his word again, and again levied the penalty. He ventured the same experiment upon another society, and found them equally ready to consider it as a venial fault, always incident to a man of quickness and gaiety; till, by degrees, he began to think himself at liberty to follow the last invitation, and was no longer shocked at the turpitude of falsehood. He made no difficulty to promise his presence at distant places, and if listlessness happened to creep upon

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him, would sit at home with great tranquillity, and has often sunk to sleep in a chair, while he held ten tables in continual expectations of his entrance.

It was so pleasant to live in perpetual vacancy, that he soon dismissed his attention as an useless incumbrance, and resigned himself to carelessness and dissipation, without any regard to the future or the past, or any other motive of action than the impulse of a sudden desire, or the attraction of immediate pleasure. The absent were immediately forgotten, and the hopes or fears felt by others, had no influence upon his conduct. He was in speculation completely just, but never kept his promise to a creditor; he was benevolent, but always deceived those friends whom he undertook to patronise or assist; he was prudent, but suffered his affairs to be embarrassed for want of regulating his accounts at stated times. He courted a young lady, and when the settlements were drawn, took a ramble into the country on the day appointed to sign them. He resolved to travel, and sent his chests on shipboard, but delayed to follow them till he lost his passage. He was summoned as an evidence in a cause of great importance, and loitered on the way till the trial was past. It is said that when he had, with great expense, formed an interest in a borough, his opponent contrived, by some agents who knew his temper, to lure him away on the day of election.

His benevolence draws him into the commission of a thousand crimes, which others less kind or civil would escape. His courtesy invites application; his promises produce dependance; he has his pockets filled with petitions, which he intends some time to deliver and enforce, and his table covered with letters of request, with which he purposes to comply; but time slips imperceptibly away, while he is either idle or busy; his friends lose their opportunities, and charge upon him their miscarriages and calamities.

This character, however contemptible, is not peculiar to Aliger. They whose activity of imagination is often shifting the scenes of expectation, are frequently subject to such

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sallies of caprice as make all their actions fortuitous, destroy the value of their friendship, obstruct the efficacy of their virtues, and set them below the meanest of those that persist in their resolutions, execute what they design, and perform what they have promised.

N°. 202. SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 22, 1752.

Πρὸς ἅπαντα δειλὸς ἐστὶν ὁ πένης πράγματα,
Καὶ πάντας αὐτοῦ καταφρονεῖν ὑπολαμβάνει.
Ὁ δὲ μετρίως πράττων περισκελέστερον
Ἅπαντα τ' ἀνιαρὰ, Δαμπρία, φέρει. CALLIMACHUS.

From no affliction is the poor exempt,
He thinks each eye surveys him with contempt;
Unmanly poverty subdues the heart,
Cankers each wound, and sharpen's ev'ry dart. F. LEWIS.

AMONG those who have endeavoured to promote learning, and rectify judgment, it has been long customary to complain of the abuse of words, which are often admitted to signify things so different, that, instead of assisting the understanding as vehicles of knowledge, they produce errour, dissention, and perplexity, because what is affirmed in one sense, is received in another.

If this ambiguity sometimes embarrasses the most solemn controversies, and obscures the demonstrations of science, it may well be expected to infest the pompous periods of declaimers, whose purpose is often only to amuse with fallacies, and change the colours of truth and falsehood; or the musical compositions of poets, whose style is professedly figurative, and whose art is imagined to consist in distorting words from their original meaning.

There are few words of which the reader believes himself better to know the import, than of *poverty*; yet, whoever studies either the poets or philosophers, will find such an account of the condition expressed by that term as his experience or observation will not easily discover to be

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true. Instead of the meanness, distress, complaint, anxiety, and dependance, which have hitherto been combined in his ideas of poverty, he will read of content, innocence, and cheerfulness, of health and safety, tranquillity and freedom; of pleasures not known but to men unencumbered with possessions; and of sleep that sheds his balsamick anodynes only on the cottage. Such are the blessings to be obtained by the resignation of riches, that kings might descend from their thrones, and generals retire from a triumph, only to slumber undisturbed in the elysium of poverty.

If these authors do not deceive us, nothing can be more absurd than that perpetual contest for wealth which keeps the world in commotion; nor any complaints more justly censured than those which proceed from want of the gifts of fortune, which we are taught by the great masters of moral wisdom to consider as golden shackles, by which the wearer is at once disabled and adorned; as luscious poisons which may for a time please the palate, but soon betray their malignity by languor and by pain.

It is the great privilege of poverty to be happy unenvied, to be healthful without physick, and secure without a guard; to obtain from the bounty of nature, what the great and wealthy are compelled to procure by the help of artists and attendants, of flatterers and spies.

But it will be found upon a nearer view, that they who extol the happiness of poverty, do not mean the same state with those who deplore its miseries. Poets have their imaginations filled with ideas of magnificence; and being accustomed to contemplate the downfall of empires, or to contrive forms of lamentations, for monarchs in distress, rank all the classes of mankind in a state of poverty, who make no approaches to the dignity of crowns. To be poor, in the epick language, is only not to command the wealth of nations, nor to have fleets and armies in pay.

Vanity has perhaps contributed to this impropriety of style. He that wishes to become a philosopher at a cheap rate, easily gratifies his ambition by submitting to poverty

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when he does not feel it, and by boasting his contempt of riches when he has already more than he enjoys. He who would shew the extent of his views, and grandeur of his conceptions, or discover his acquaintance with splendour and magnificence, may talk like Cowley, of an humble station and quiet obscurity, of the paucity of nature's wants, and the inconveniencies of superfluity, and at last, like him, limit his desires to five hundred pounds a year; a fortune, indeed, not exuberant, when we compare it with the expenses of pride and luxury, but to which it little becomes a philosopher to affix the name of poverty, since no man can, with any propriety, be termed poor, who does not see the greater part of mankind richer than himself.

As little is the general condition of human life understood by the panegyrists and historians, who amuse us with accounts of the poverty of heroes and sages. Riches are of no value in themselves, their use is discovered only in that which they procure. They are not coveted, unless by narrow understandings, which confound the means with the end, but for the sake of power, influence, and esteem; or, by some of less elevated and refined sentiments, as necessary to sensual enjoyment.

The pleasures of luxury, many have, without uncommon virtue, been able to despise, even when affluence and idleness have concurred to tempt them; and therefore he who feels nothing from indigence but the want of gratifications which he could not in any other condition make consistent with innocence, has given no proof of eminent patience. Esteem and influence every man desires, but they are equally pleasing, and equally valuable, by whatever means they are obtained; and whoever has found the art of securing them without the help of money, ought, in reality, to be accounted rich, since he has all that riches can purchase to a wise man. Cincinnatus, though he lived upon a few acres cultivated by his own hand, was sufficiently removed from all the evils generally comprehended under the name of poverty, when his reputation

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was such, that the voice of his country called him from his farm to take absolute command into his hand; nor was Diogenes much mortified by his residence in a tub, where he was honoured with the visit of Alexander the Great.

The same fallacy has conciliated veneration to the religious orders. When we behold a man abdicating the hope of terrestrial possessions, and precluding himself, by an irrevocable vow, from the pursuit and acquisition of all that his fellow-beings consider as worthy of wishes and endeavours, we are immediately struck with the purity, abstraction, and firmness of his mind, and regard him as wholly employed in securing the interests of futurity, and devoid of any other care than to gain, at whatever price, the surest passage to eternal rest.

Yet, what can the votary be justly said to have lost of his present happiness? If he resides in a convent, he converses only with men whose condition is the same with his own; he has, from the munificence of the founder, all the necessaries of life, and is safe from that destitution, which Hooker declares to be "such an impediment to virtue, as, till it be removed, suffereth not the mind of man to admit any other care." All temptations to envy and competition are shut out from his retreat; he is not pained with the sight of unattainable dignity, nor insulted with the bluster of insolence, or the smile of forced familiarity. If he wanders abroad, the sanctity of his character amply compensates all other distinctions; he is seldom seen but with reverence, nor heard but with submission.

It has been remarked, that death, though often defied in the field, seldom fails to terrify when it approaches the bed of sickness in its natural horrour; so poverty may easily be endured, while associated with dignity and reputation, but will always be shunned and dreaded, when it is accompanied with ignominy and contempt.

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N°. 203. TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 25, 1752.

Cum volet illa dies, quæ nil nisi corporis hujus
Jus habet, incerti spatium mihi finiat ævi. OVID. Met. xv. 873.

Come, soon or late, death's undetermin'd day,
This mortal being only can decay. WELSTED.

IT seems to be the fate of man to seek all his consolations in futurity. The time present is seldom able to fill desire or imagination with immediate enjoyment, and we are forced to supply its deficiencies by recollection or anticipation.

Every one has so often detected the fallaciousness of hope, and the inconvenience of teaching himself to expect what a thousand accidents may preclude, that, when time has abated the confidence with which youth rushes out to take possession of the world, we endeavour, or wish, to find entertainment in the review of life, and to repose upon real facts, and certain experience. This is perhaps one reason, among many, why age delights in narratives.

But so full is the world of calamity, that every source of pleasure is polluted, and every retirement of tranquillity disturbed. When time has supplied us with events sufficient to employ our thoughts, it has mingled them with so many disasters, that we shrink from their remembrance, dread their intrusion upon our minds, and fly from them as from enemies that pursue us with torture.

No man past the middle point of life can sit down to feast upon the pleasures of youth without finding the banquet embittered by the cup of sorrow; he may revive lucky accidents, and pleasing extravagancies; many days of harmless frolick, or nights of honest festivity, will perhaps recur; or, if he has been engaged in scenes of action, and acquainted with affairs of difficulty and vicissitudes of fortune, he may enjoy the nobler pleasure of looking back upon distress firmly supported, dangers resolutely encountered, and opposition artfully defeated. Æneas properly comforts his companions, when, after the horrours of a

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storm, they have landed on an unknown and desolate country, with the hope that their miseries will be at some distant time recounted with delight. There are few higher gratifications, than that of reflection on surmounted evils, when they are not incurred nor protracted by our fault, and neither reproach us with cowardice nor guilt.

But this felicity is almost always abated by the reflection that they with whom we should be most pleased to share it are now in the grave. A few years make such havock in human generations, that we soon see ourselves deprived of those with whom we entered the world, and whom the participation of pleasures or fatigues had endeared to our remembrance. The man of enterprise recounts his adventures and expedients, but is forced, at the close of the relation, to pay a sigh to the names of those that contributed to his success; he that passes his life among the gayer part of mankind, has his remembrance stored with remarks and repartees of wits, whose sprightliness and merriment are now lost in perpetual silence; the trader, whose industry has supplied the want of inheritance, repines in solitary plenty at the absence of companions, with whom he had planned out amusements for his latter years; and the scholar, whose merit, after a long series of efforts, raises him from obscurity, looks round in vain from his exaltation for his old friends or enemies, whose applause or mortification would heighten his triumph.

Among Martial's requisites to happiness is, *Res non parta labore, sed relicta*, "an estate not gained by industry, but left by inheritance." It is necessary to the completion of every good, that it be timely obtained; for whatever comes at the close of life will come too late to give much delight; yet all human happiness has its defects. Of what we do not gain for ourselves we have only a faint and imperfect fruition, because we cannot compare the difference between want and possession, or at least can derive from it no conviction of our own abilities, nor any increase of self-esteem; what we acquire by bravery or science, by mental or corporeal diligence,

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comes at last when we cannot communicate, and, therefore, cannot enjoy it.

Thus every period of life is obliged to borrow its happiness from the time to come. In youth we have nothing past to entertain us, and in age, we derive little from retrospect but hopeless sorrow. Yet the future likewise has its limits, which the imagination dreads to approach, but which we see to be not far distant. The loss of our friends and companions impresses hourly upon us the necessity of our own departure; we know that the schemes of man are quickly at an end, that we must soon lie down in the grave with the forgotten multitudes of former ages, and yield our place to others, who, like us, shall be driven awhile by hope or fear about the surface of the earth, and then like us be lost in the shades of death.

Beyond this termination of our material existence, we are, therefore, obliged to extend our hopes; and almost every man indulges his imagination with something, which is not to happen till he has changed his manner of being: some amuse themselves with entails and settlements, provide for the perpetuation of families and honours, or contrive to obviate the dissipation of the fortunes, which it has been their business to accumulate; others, more refined or exalted, congratulate their own hearts upon the future extent of their reputation, the reverence of distant nations, and the gratitude of unprejudiced posterity.

They whose souls are so chained down to coffers and tenements, that they cannot conceive a state in which they shall look upon them with less solicitude, are seldom attentive or flexible to arguments; but the votaries of fame are capable of reflection, and, therefore, may be called to reconsider the probability of their expectations.

Whether to be remembered in remote times be worthy of a wise man's wish, has not yet been satisfactorily decided; and, indeed, to be long remembered, can happen to so small a number, that the bulk of mankind has very little interest in the question. There is never room in the world for more than a certain quantity or measure of re-

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nown. The necessary business of life, the immediate pleasures or pains of every condition, leave us not leisure beyond a fixed proportion for contemplations which do not forcibly influence our present welfare. When this vacuity is filled, no characters can be admitted into the circulation of fame, but by occupying the place of some that must be thrust into oblivion. The eye of the mind, like that of the body, can only extend its view to new objects, by losing sight of those which are now before it.

Reputation is therefore a meteor, which blazes a while and disappears for ever; and, if we except a few transcendent and invincible names, which no revolutions of opinion or length of time is able to suppress; all those that engage our thoughts, or diversify our conversation, are every moment hasting to obscurity, as new favourites are adopted by fashion.

It is not therefore from this world, that any ray of comfort can proceed, to cheer the gloom of the last hour. But futurity has still its prospects; there is yet happiness in reserve, which, if we transfer our attention to it, will support us in the pains of disease, and the languor of decay. This happiness we may expect with confidence, because it is out of the power of chance, and may be attained by all that sincerely desire and earnestly pursue it. On this therefore every mind ought finally to rest. Hope is the chief blessing of man, and that hope only is rational, of which we are certain that it cannot deceive us.

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N°. 204. SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 29, 1752

Nemo tam divos habuit faventes,
Crastinum ut possit sibi polliceri. SENECA.

Of heaven's protection who can be
So confident to utter this?—
To-morrow I will spend in bliss. F. LEWIS.

SEGED, lord of Ethiopia, to the inhabitants of the world: To the sons of *Presumption*, humility and fear; and to the daughters of *Sorrow*, content and acquiescence.

Thus, in the twenty-seventh year of his reign, spoke Seged, the monarch of forty nations, the distributor of the waters of the Nile: "At length, Seged, thy toils are at an end; thou hast reconciled disaffection, thou hast suppressed rebellion, thou hast pacified the jealousies of thy courtiers, thou hast chased war from thy confines, and erected fortresses in the lands of thine enemies. All who have offended thee tremble in thy presence, and wherever thy voice is heard, it is obeyed. Thy throne is surrounded by armies, numerous as the locusts of the summer, and resistless as the blasts of pestilence. Thy magazines are stored with ammunition, thy treasures overflow with the tribute of conquered kingdoms. Plenty waves upon thy fields, and opulence glitters in thy cities. Thy nod is as the earthquake that shakes the mountains, and thy smile as the dawn of the vernal day. In thy hand is the strength of thousands, and thy health is the health of millions. Thy palace is gladdened by the song of praise, and thy path perfumed by the breath of benediction. Thy subjects gaze upon thy greatness, and think of danger or misery no more. Why, Seged, wilt not thou partake the blessings thou bestowest? Why shouldst thou only forbear to rejoice in this general felicity? Why should thy face be clouded with anxiety, when the meanest of those who call thee sovereign, gives the day to festivity, and the night to peace? At length, Seged, reflect and be wise. What is

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the gift of conquest but safety? Why are riches collected but to purchase happiness?"

Seged then ordered the house of pleasure, built in an island of the lake of Dambea, to be prepared for his reception. "I will retire," says he, "for ten days from tumult and care, from counsels and decrees. Long quiet is not the lot of the governours of nations, but a cessation of ten days cannot be denied me. This short interval of happiness may surely be secured from the interruption of fear or perplexity, sorrow or disappointment. I will exclude all trouble from my abode, and remove from my thoughts whatever may confuse the harmony of the concert, or abate the sweetness of the banquet. I will fill the whole capacity of my soul with enjoyment, and try what it is to live without a wish unsatisfied."

In a few days the orders were performed, and Seged hasted to the palace of Dambea, which stood in an island cultivated only for pleasure, planted with every flower that spreads its colours to the sun, and every shrub that sheds fragrance in the air. In one part of this extensive garden, were open walks for excursions in the morning; in another, thick groves, and silent arbours, and bubbling fountains for repose at noon. All that could solace the sense, or flatter the fancy, all that industry could extort from nature, or wealth furnish to art, all that conquest could seize, or beneficence attract, was collected together, and every perception of delight was excited and gratified.

Into this delicious region Seged summoned all the persons of his court, who seemed eminently qualified to receive or communicate pleasure. His call was readily obeyed; the young, the fair, the vivacious, and the witty, were all in haste to be sated with felicity. They sailed jocund over the lake, which seemed to smooth its surface before them: their passage was cheered with musick, and their hearts dilated with expectation.

Seged, landing here with his band of pleasure, determined from that hour to break off all acquaintance with discontent, to give his heart for ten days to ease and jollity,

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and then fall back to the common state of man, and suffer his life to be diversified, as before, with joy and sorrow.

He immediately entered his chamber, to consider where he should begin his circle of happiness. He had all the artists of delight before him, but knew not whom to call, since he could not enjoy one, but by delaying the performance of another. He chose and rejected, he resolved and changed his resolution, till his faculties were harassed, and his thoughts confused; then returned to the apartment where his presence was expected, with languid eyes and clouded countenance, and spread the infection of uneasiness over the whole assembly. He observed their depression, and was offended, for he found his vexation increased by those whom he expected to dissipate and relieve it. He retired again to his private chamber, and sought for consolation in his own mind; one thought flowed in upon another; a long succession of images seized his attention; the moments crept imperceptibly away through the gloom of pensiveness, till, having recovered his tranquillity, he lifted his head, and saw the lake brightened by the setting sun. "Such," said Seged, sighing, "is the longest day of human existence: before we have learned to use it, we find it at an end."

The regret which he felt for the loss of so great a part of his first day, took from him all disposition to enjoy the evening; and, after having endeavoured, for the sake of his attendants, to force an air of gaiety, and excite that mirth which he could not share, he resolved to refer his hopes to the next morning, and lay down to partake with the slaves of labour and poverty the blessing of sleep.

He rose early the second morning, and resolved now to be happy. He therefore fixed upon the gate of the palace an edict, importing, that whoever, during nine days, should appear in the presence of the king with a dejected countenance, or utter any expression of discontent or sorrow, should be driven for ever from the palace of Dambea.

This edict was immediately made known in every chamber of the court, and bower of the gardens. Mirth was

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frighted away, and they who were before dancing in the lawns, or singing in the shades, were at once engaged in the care of regulating their looks, that Seged might find his will punctually obeyed, and see none among them liable to banishment.

Seged now met every face settled in a smile; but a smile that betrayed solicitude, timidity, and constraint. He accosted his favourites with familiarity and softness; but they durst not speak without premeditation, lest they should be convicted of discontent or sorrow. He proposed diversions, to which no objection was made, because objection would have implied uneasiness; but they were regarded with indifference by the courtiers, who had no other desire than to signalize themselves by clamorous exultation. He offered various topicks of conversation, but obtained only forced jests, and laborious laughter; and after many attempts to animate his train to confidence and alacrity, was obliged to confess to himself the impotence of command, and resign another day to grief and disappointment.

He at last relieved his companions from their terrours, and shut himself up in his chamber to ascertain, by different measures, the felicity of the succeeding days. At length he threw himself on the bed, and closed his eyes, but imagined, in his sleep, that his palace and gardens were overwhelmed by an inundation, and waked with all the terrours of a man struggling in the water. He composed himself again to rest, but was affrighted by an imaginary irruption into his kingdom; and striving, as is usual in dreams, without ability to move, fancied himself betrayed to his enemies, and again started up with horrour and indignation.

It was now day, and fear was so strongly impressed on his mind, that he could sleep no more. He rose, but his thoughts were filled with the deluge and invasion, nor was he able to disengage his attention, or mingle with vacancy and ease in any amusement. At length his perturbation gave way to reason, and he resolved no longer to be ha-

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rassed by visionary miseries; but, before this resolution could be completed, half the day had elapsed: he felt a new conviction of the uncertainty of human schemes, and could not forbear to bewail the weakness of that being whose quiet was to be interrupted by vapours of the fancy. Having been first disturbed by a dream, he afterwards grieved that a dream could disturb him. He at last discovered, that his terrours and grief were equally vain, and that to lose the present in lamenting the past, was voluntarily to protract a melancholy vision. The third day was now declining, and Seged again resolved to be happy on the morrow.

N°. 205. TUESDAY, MARCH 3, 1752.

Volat ambiguis
Mobilis alis hora. nec ulli
Præstat velox Fortuna fidem. SENECA. Hippol. 1141.

On fickle wings the minutes haste,
And fortune's favours never last. F. LEWIS.

ON the fourth morning Seged rose early, refreshed with sleep, vigorous with health, and eager with expectation. He entered the garden, attended by the princes and ladies of his court, and seeing nothing about him but airy cheerfulness, began to say to his heart, "This day shall be a day of pleasure." The sun played upon the water, the birds warbled in the groves, and the gales quivered among the branches. He roved from walk to walk as chance directed him, and sometimes listened to the songs, sometimes mingled with the dancers, sometimes let loose his imagination in flights of merriment; and sometimes uttered grave reflections, and sententious maxims, and feasted on the admiration with which they were received.

Thus the day rolled on, without any accident of vexation, or intrusion of melancholy thoughts. All that beheld him caught gladness from his looks, and the sight of

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happiness conferred by himself filled his heart with satisfaction: but having passed three hours in this harmless luxury, he was alarmed on a sudden by an universal scream among the women, and turning back saw the whole assembly flying in confusion. A young crocodile had risen out of the lake, and was ranging the garden in wantonness or hunger. Seged beheld him with indignation, as a disturber of his felicity, and chased him back into the lake, but could not persuade his retinue to stay, or free their hearts from the terrour which had seized upon them. The princesses inclosed themselves in the palace, and could yet scarcely believe themselves in safety. Every attention was fixed upon the late danger and escape, and no mind was any longer at leisure for gay sallies or careless prattle.

Seged had now no other employment than to contemplate the innumerable casualties which lie in ambush on every side to intercept the happiness of man, and break in upon the hour of delight and tranquillity. He had, however, the consolation of thinking, that he had not been now disappointed by his own fault, and that the accident which had blasted the hopes of the day, might easily be prevented by future caution.

That he might provide for the pleasure of the next morning, he resolved to repeal his penal edict, since he had already found that discontent and melancholy were not to be frighted away by the threats of authority, and that pleasure would only reside where she was exempted from control. He therefore invited all the companions of his retreat to unbounded pleasantry, by proposing prizes for those who should, on the following day, distinguish themselves by any festive performances; the tables of the antechamber were covered with gold and pearls, and robes and garlands decreed the rewards of those who could refine elegance or heighten pleasure.

At this display of riches every eye immediately sparkled, and every tongue was busied in celebrating the bounty and magnificence of the emperour. But when Seged en-

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tered, in hopes of uncommon entertainment from universal emulation, he found that any passion too strongly agitated, puts an end to that tranquillity which is necessary to mirth, and that the mind, that is to be moved by the gentle ventilations of gaiety, must be first smoothed by a total calm. Whatever we ardently wish to gain, we must in the same degree be afraid to lose, and fear and pleasure cannot dwell together.

All was now care and solicitude. Nothing was done or spoken, but with so visible an endeavour at perfection, as always failed to delight, though it sometimes forced admiration: and Seged could not but observe with sorrow, that his prizes had more influence than himself. As the evening approached, the contest grew more earnest, and those who were forced to allow themselves excelled, began to discover the malignity of defeat, first by angry glances, and at last by contemptuous murmurs. Seged likewise shared the anxiety of the day, for considering himself as obliged to distribute with exact justice the prizes which had been so zealously sought, he durst never remit his attention, but passed his time upon the rack of doubt, in balancing different kinds of merit, and adjusting the claims of all the competitors.

At last, knowing that no exactness could satisfy those whose hopes he should disappoint, and thinking that on a day set apart for happiness, it would be cruel to oppress any heart with sorrow, he declared that all had pleased him alike, and dismissed all with presents of equal value.

Seged soon saw that his caution had not been able to avoid offence. They who had believed themselves secure of the highest prizes, were not pleased to be levelled with the crowd: and though, by the liberality of the king, they received more than his promise had entitled them to expect, they departed unsatisfied, because they were honoured with no distinction, and wanted an opportunity to triumph in the mortification of their opponents. "Behold here," said Seged, "the condition of him who places his happiness in the happiness of others." He then retired

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to meditate, and, while the courtiers were repining at his distributions, saw the fifth sun go down in discontent.

The next dawn renewed his resolution to be happy. But having learned how little he could effect by settled schemes or preparatory measures, he thought it best to give up one day entirely to chance, and left every one to please and be pleased his own way.

This relaxation of regularity diffused a general complacence through the whole court, and the emperour imagined that he had at last found the secret of obtaining an interval of felicity. But as he was roving in this careless assembly with equal carelessness, he overheard one of his courtiers in a close arbour murmuring alone: "What merit has Seged above us, that we should thus fear and obey him, a man, whom, whatever he may have formerly performed, his luxury now shows to have the same weakness with ourselves." This charge affected him the more, as it was uttered by one whom he had always observed among the most abject of his flatterers. At first his indignation prompted him to severity; but reflecting, that what was spoken without intention to be heard, was to be considered as only thought, and was perhaps but the sudden burst of casual and temporary vexation, he invented some decent pretence to send him away, that his retreat might not be tainted with the breath of envy, and, after the struggle of deliberation was past, and all desire of revenge utterly suppressed, passed the evening not only with tranquillity, but triumph, though none but himself was conscious of the victory.

The remembrance of his clemency cheered the beginning of the seventh day, and nothing happened to disturb the pleasure of Seged, till, looking on the tree that shaded him, he recollected, that, under a tree of the same kind he had passed the night after his defeat in the kingdom of Goiama. The reflection on his loss, his dishonour, and the miseries which his subjects suffered from the invader, filled him with sadness. At last he shook off the weight of sorrow, and began to solace himself with his usual pleasures,

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when his tranquillity was again disturbed by jealousies which the late contest for the prizes had produced, and which, having in vain tried to pacify them by persuasion, he was forced to silence by command.

On the eighth morning Seged was awakened early by an unusual hurry in the apartments, and inquiring the cause, was told that the princess Balkis was seized with sickness. He rose, and calling the physicians, found that they had little hope of her recovery. Here was an end of jollity: all his thoughts were now upon his daughter, whose eyes he closed on the tenth day.

Such were the days which Seged of Ethiopia had appropriated to a short respiration from the fatigues of war and the cares of government. This narrative he has bequeathed to future generations, that no man hereafter may presume to say, "This day shall be a day of happiness."

N°. 206. SATURDAY, MARCH 7, 1752.

——— *Propositi nondum pudet, atque eadem est mens,*
Ut bona summa putes, aliena vivere quadra. Juv. Sat. v. 1.

But harden'd by affronts, and still the same,
Lost to all sense of honour and of fame,
Thou yet canst love to haunt the great man's board,
And think no supper good but with a lord. Bowles.

When Diogenes was once asked, what kind of wine he liked best? he answered, "That which is drunk at the cost of others."

Though the character of Diogenes has never excited any general zeal of imitation, there are many who resemble him in his taste of wine; many who are frugal, though not abstemious; whose appetites, though too powerful for reason, are kept under restraint by avarice; and to whom all delicacies lose their flavour, when they cannot be obtained but at their own expense.

Nothing produces more singularity of manners and in-

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constancy of life, than the conflict of opposite vices in the same mind. He that uniformly pursues any purpose, whether good or bad, has a settled principle of action; and as he may always find associates who are travelling the same way, is countenanced by example, and sheltered in the multitude; but a man, actuated at once by different desires, must move in a direction peculiar to himself, and suffer that reproach which we are naturally inclined to bestow on those who deviate from the rest of the world, even without inquiring whether they are worse or better.

Yet this conflict of desires sometimes produces wonderful efforts. To riot in far-fetched dishes, or surfeit with unexhausted variety, and yet practise the most rigid economy, is surely an art which may justly draw the eyes of mankind upon them whose industry or judgment has enabled them to attain it. To him, indeed, who is content to break open the chests, or mortgage the manours, of his ancestors, that he may hire the ministers of excess at the highest price, gluttony is an easy science; yet we often hear the votaries of luxury boasting of the elegance which they owe to the taste of others, relating with rapture the succession of dishes with which their cooks and caterers supply them; and expecting their share of praise with the discoverers of arts and the civilizers of nations. But to shorten the way to convivial happiness, by eating without cost, is a secret hitherto in few hands, but which certainly deserves the curiosity of those whose principal enjoyment is their dinner, and who see the sun rise with no other hope than that they shall fill their bellies before it sets.

Of them that have within my knowledge attempted this scheme of happiness, the greater part have been immediately obliged to desist; and some, whom their first attempts flattered with success, were reduced by degrees to a few tables, from which they were at last chased to make way for others; and having long habituated themselves to superfluous plenty, growled away their latter years in discontented competence.

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None enter the regions of luxury with higher expectations than men of wit, who imagine, that they shall never want a welcome to that company whose ideas they can enlarge, or whose imaginations they can elevate, and believe themselves able to pay for their wine with the mirth which it qualifies them to produce. Full of this opinion, they crowd with little invitation, wherever the smell of a feast allures them, but are seldom encouraged to repeat their visits, being dreaded by the pert as rivals, and hated by the dull as disturbers of the company.

No man has been so happy in gaining and keeping the privilege of living at luxurious houses as Gulosulus, who, after thirty years of continual revelry, has now established, by uncontroverted prescription, his claim to partake of every entertainment, and whose presence they who aspire to the praise of a sumptuous table are careful to procure on a day of importance, by sending the invitation a fortnight before.

Gulosulus entered the world without any eminent degree of merit; but was careful to frequent houses where persons of rank resorted. By being often seen, he became in time known; and, from sitting in the same room, was suffered to mix in idle conversation, or assisted to fill up a vacant hour, when better amusement was not readily to be had. From the coffee-house he was sometimes taken away to dinner; and as no man refuses the acquaintance of him whom he sees admitted to familiarity by others of equal dignity, when he had been met at a few tables, he with less difficulty found the way to more, till at last he was regularly expected to appear wherever preparations are made for a feast, within the circuit of his acquaintance.

When he was thus by accident initiated in luxury, he felt in himself no inclination to retire from a life of so much pleasure, and therefore very seriously considered how he might continue it. Great qualities, or uncommon accomplishments, he did not find necessary; for he had already seen that merit rather enforces respect than attracts fondness; and as he thought no folly greater than

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that of losing a dinner for any other gratification, he often congratulated himself, that he had none of that disgusting excellence which impresses awe upon greatness, and condemns its possessors to the society of those who are wise or brave, and indigent as themselves.

Gulosulus, having never allotted much of his time to books or meditation, had no opinion in philosophy or politicks, and was not in danger of injuring his interest by dogmatical positions or violent contradiction. If a dispute arose, he took care to listen with earnest attention; and, when either speaker grew vehement and loud, turned towards him with eager quickness, and uttered a short phrase of admiration, as if surprised by such cogency of argument as he had never known before. By this silent concession, he generally preserved in either controvertist such a conviction of his own superiority, as inclined him rather to pity than irritate his adversary, and prevented those outrages which are sometimes produced by the rage of defeat, or petulance of triumph.

Gulosulus was never embarrassed but when he was required to declare his sentiments before he had been able to discover to which side the master of the house inclined, for it was his invariable rule to adopt the notions of those that invited him.

It will sometimes happen that the insolence of wealth breaks into contemptuousness, or the turbulence of wine requires a vent; and Gulosulus seldom fails of being singled out on such emergencies, as one on whom any experiment of ribaldry may be safely tried. Sometimes his lordship finds himself inclined to exhibit a specimen of raillery for the diversion of his guests, and Gulosulus always supplies him with a subject of merriment. But he has learned to consider rudeness and indignities as familiarities that entitle him to greater freedom: he comforts himself, that those who treat and insult him pay for their laughter, and that he keeps his money while they enjoy their jest.

His chief policy consists in selecting some dish from

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every course, and recommending it to the company, with an air so decisive, that no one ventures to contradict him. By this practice he acquires at a feast a kind of dictatorial authority; his taste becomes the standard of pickles and seasoning, and he is venerated by the professors of epicurism, as the only man who understands the niceties of cookery.

Whenever a new sauce is imported, or any innovation made in the culinary system, he procures the earliest intelligence, and the most authentick receipt; and, by communicating his knowledge under proper injunctions of secrecy, gains a right of tasting his own dish whenever it is prepared, that he may tell whether his directions have been fully understood.

By this method of life Gulosulus has so impressed on his imagination the dignity of feasting, that he has no other topick of talk, or subject of meditation. His calendar is a bill of fare; he measures the year by successive dainties. The only common-places of his memory are his meals; and if you ask him at what time an event happened, he considers whether he heard it after a dinner of turbot or venison. He knows, indeed, that those who value themselves upon sense, learning, or piety, speak of him with contempt; but he considers them as wretches, envious or ignorant, who do not know his happiness, or wish to supplant him; and declares to his friends, that he is fully satisfied with his own conduct, since he has fed every day on twenty dishes, and yet doubled his estate.

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N°. 207. TUESDAY, MARCH 10, 1752.

Solve senescentem mature anus equum, ne
Peccet ad extremum ridendus.—— HOR. Lib. i. Ep. i. 8.

The voice of reason cries with winning force,
Loose from the rapid car your aged horse,
Lest, in the race derided, left behind,
He drag his jaded limbs, and burst his wind. FRANCIS.

SUCH is the emptiness of human enjoyment, that we are always impatient of the present. Attainment is followed by neglect, and possession, by disgust; and the malicious remark of the Greek epigrammatist on marriage may be applied to every other course of life, that its two days of happiness are the first and the last.

Few moments are more pleasing than those in which the mind is concerting measures for a new undertaking. From the first hint that wakens the fancy, till the hour of actual execution, all is improvement and progress, triumph and felicity. Every hour brings additions to the original scheme, suggests some new expedient to secure success, or discovers consequential advantages not hitherto foreseen. While preparations are made, and materials accumulated, day glides after day through elysian prospects, and the heart dances to the song of hope.

Such is the pleasure of projecting, that many content themselves with a succession of visionary schemes, and wear out their allotted time in the calm amusement of contriving what they never attempt or hope to execute.

Others, not able to feast their imagination with pure ideas, advance somewhat nearer to the grossness of action; with great diligence collect whatever is requisite to their design, and, after a thousand researches and consultations, are snatched away by death, as they stand *in procinctu*, waiting for a proper opportunity to begin.

If there were no other end of life, than to find some adequate solace for every day, I know not whether any condition could be preferred to that of the man who

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involves himself in his own thoughts, and never suffers experience to show him the vanity of speculation; for no sooner are notions reduced to practice, than tranquillity and confidence forsake the breast; every day brings its task, and often without bringing abilities, to perform it: difficulties embarrass, uncertainty perplexes, opposition retards, censure exasperates, or neglect depresses. We proceed because we have begun; we complete our design, that the labour already spent may not be vain; but as expectation gradually dies away, the gay smile of alacrity disappears, we are compelled to implore severer powers, and trust the event to patience and constancy.

When once our labour has begun, the comfort that enables us to endure it is the prospect of its end; for though in every long work there are some joyous intervals of self-applause, when the attention is recreated by unexpected facility, and the imagination soothed by incidental excellencies; yet the toil with which performance struggles after idea, is so irksome and disgusting, and so frequent is the necessity of resting below that perfection which we imagined within our reach, that seldom any man obtains more from his endeavours than a painful conviction of his defects, and a continual resuscitation of desires which he feels himself unable to gratify.

So certainly is weariness the concomitant of our undertakings, that every man, in whatever he is engaged, consoles himself with the hope of change; if he has made his way by assiduity to publick employment, he talks among his friends of the delight of retreat; if by the necessity of solitary application he is secluded from the world, he listens with a beating heart to distant noises, longs to mingle with living beings, and resolves to take hereafter his fill of diversions, or display his abilities on the universal theatre, and enjoy the pleasure of distinction and applause.

Every desire, however innocent, grows dangerous, as by long indulgence it becomes ascendant in the mind. When we have been much accustomed to consider any thing as capable of giving happiness, it is not easy to restrain our

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ardour, or to forbear some precipitation in our advances, and irregularity in our pursuits. He that has cultivated the tree, watched the swelling bud and opening blossom, and pleased himself with computing how much every sun and shower add to its growth, scarcely stays till the fruit has obtained its maturity, but defeats his own cares by eagerness to reward them. When we have diligently laboured for any purpose, we are willing to believe that we have attained it, and, because we have already done much, too suddenly conclude that no more is to be done.

All attraction is increased by the approach of the attracting body. We never find ourselves so desirous to finish as in the latter part of our work, or so impatient of delay, as when we know that delay cannot be long. This unseasonable importunity of discontent may be partly imputed to languor and weariness, which must always oppress those more whose toil has been longer continued; but the greater part usually proceeds from frequent contemplation of that ease which is now considered as within reach, and which, when it has once flattered our hopes, we cannot suffer to be withheld.

In some of the noblest compositions of wit, the conclusion falls below the vigour and spirit of the first books; and as a genius is not to be degraded by the imputation of human failings, the cause of this declension is commonly sought in the structure of the work, and plausible reasons are given why, in the defective part, less ornament was necessary, or less could be admitted. But, perhaps, the author would have confessed, that his fancy was tired, and his perseverance broken; that he knew his design to be unfinished, but that, when he saw the end so near, he could no longer refuse to be at rest.

Against the instillations of this frigid opiate, the heart should be secured by all the considerations which once concurred to kindle the ardour of enterprise. Whatever motive first incited action, has still greater force to stimulate perseverance; since he that might have lain still at first in blameless obscurity, cannot afterwards desist but

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with infamy and reproach. He, whom a doubtful promise of distant good could encourage to set difficulties at defiance, ought not to remit his vigour, when he has almost obtained his recompense. To faint or loiter, when only the last efforts are required, is to steer the ship through tempests, and abandon it to the winds in sight of land; it is to break the ground and scatter the seed, and at last to neglect the harvest.

The masters of rhetorick direct, that the most forcible arguments be produced in the latter part of an oration, lest they should be effaced or perplexed by supervenient images. This precept may be justly extended to the series of life: nothing is ended with honour, which does not conclude better than it began. It is not sufficient to maintain the first vigour; for excellence loses its effect upon the mind by custom, as light after a time ceases to dazzle. Admiration must be continued by that novelty which first produced it, and how much soever is given, there must always be reason to imagine that more remains.

We not only are most sensible of the last impressions, but such is the unwillingness of mankind to admit transcendant merit, that, though it be difficult to obliterate the reproach of miscarriages by any subsequent achievement, however illustrious, yet the reputation raised by a long train of success may be finally ruined by a single failure; for weakness or errour will be always remembered by that malice and envy which it gratifies.

For the prevention of that disgrace, which lassitude and negligence may bring at last upon the greatest performances, it is necessary to proportion carefully our labour to our strength. If the design comprises many parts, equally essential, and, therefore, not to be separated, the only time for caution is before we engage; the powers of the mind must be then impartially estimated, and it must be remembered that, not to complete the plan, is not to have begun it; and that nothing is done while any thing is omitted.

But, if the task consists in the repetition of single acts,

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no one of which derives its efficacy from the rest, it may be attempted with less scruple, because there is always opportunity to retreat with honour. The danger is only, lest we expect from the world the indulgence with which most are disposed to treat themselves; and in the hour of listlessness imagine, that the diligence of one day will atone for the idleness of another, and that applause begun by approbation will be continued by habit.

He that is himself weary will soon weary the publick. Let him therefore lay down his employment, whatever it be, who can no longer exert his former activity or attention; let him not endeavour to struggle with censure, or obstinately infest the stage till a general hiss commands him to depart.

N°. 208. SATURDAY, MARCH 14, 1752.

Ἡράκλειτος ἐγώ· τί με ὦ κάτω ἕλκετ' ἄμουσοι;
Οὐχ' ὑμῖν ἐπόνουν, τοῖς δέ μ' ἐπισταμένοις·
Εἷς ἐμοὶ ἄνθρωπος τρισμύριοι· οἱ δ' ἀνάριθμοι
Οὐδείς· ταῦτ' αὐδῶ καὶ παρὰ Περσεφόνῃ· DIOG. LAERT.

Begone, ye blockheads, Heraclitus cries,
And leave my labours to the learn'd and wise;
By wit, by knowledge, studious to be read,
I scorn the multitude, alive and dead.

TIME, which puts an end to all human pleasures and sorrows, has likewise concluded the labours of the Rambler. Having supported, for two years, the anxious employment of a periodical writer, and multiplied my essays to upwards of two hundred, I have now determined to desist.

The reasons of this resolution it is of little importance to declare, since justification is unnecessary when no objection is made. I am far from supposing, that the cessation of my performances will raise any inquiry, for I have never been much a favourite of the publick, nor can boast

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that, in the progress of my undertaking, I have been animated by the rewards of the liberal, the caresses of the great, or the praises of the eminent.

But I have no design to gratify pride by submission, or malice by lamentation; nor think it reasonable to complain of neglect from those whose regard I never solicited. If I have not been distinguished by the distributors of literary honours, I have seldom descended to the arts by which favour is obtained. I have seen the meteors of fashions rise and fall, without any attempt to add a moment to their duration. I have never complied with temporary curiosity, nor enabled my readers to discuss the topick of the day; I have rarely exemplified my assertions by living characters; in my papers, no man could look for censures of his enemies, or praises of himself; and they only were expected to peruse them, whose passions left them leisure for abstracted truth, and whom virtue could please by its naked dignity.

To some, however, I am indebted for encouragement, and to others for assistance. The number of my friends was never great, but they have been such as would not suffer me to think that I was writing in vain, and I did not feel much dejection from the want of popularity.

My obligations having not been frequent, my acknowledgments may be soon despatched. I can restore to all my correspondents their productions, with little diminution of the bulk of my volumes, though not without the loss of some pieces to which particular honours have been paid.

The parts from which I claim no other praise than that of having given them an opportunity of appearing, are the four billets in the tenth paper, the second letter in the fifteenth, the thirtieth, the forty-fourth, the ninety-seventh, and the hundredth papers, and the second letter in the hundred and seventh.

Having thus deprived myself of many excuses which candour might have admitted for the inequality of my compositions, being no longer able to allege the necessity of gratifying correspondents, the importunity with which

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publication was solicited, or obstinacy with which correction was rejected, I must remain accountable for all my faults, and submit, without subterfuge, to the censures of criticism, which, however, I shall not endeavour to soften by a formal deprecation, or to overbear by the influence of a patron. The supplications of an author never yet reprieved him a moment from oblivion; and, though greatness has sometimes sheltered guilt, it can afford no protection to ignorance or dulness. Having hitherto attempted only the propagation of truth, I will not at last violate it by the confession of terrours which I do not feel; having laboured to maintain the dignity of virtue, I will not now degrade it by the meanness of dedication.

The seeming vanity with which I have sometimes spoken of myself, would perhaps require an apology, were it not extenuated by the example of those who have published essays before me, and by the privilege which every nameless writer has been hitherto allowed. "A mask," says Castiglione, "confers a right of acting and speaking with less restraint, even when the wearer happens to be known." He that is discovered without his own consent, may claim some indulgence, and cannot be rigorously called to justify those sallies or frolicks which his disguise must prove him desirous to conceal.

But I have been cautious lest this offence should be frequently or grossly committed; for, as one of the philosophers directs us to live with a friend, as with one that is some time to become an enemy, I have always thought it the duty of an anonymous author to write, as if he expected to be hereafter known.

I am willing to flatter myself with hopes, that, by collecting these papers, I am not preparing, for my future life, either shame or repentance. That all are happily imagined, or accurately polished, that the same sentiments have not sometimes recurred, or the same expressions been too frequently repeated, I have not confidence in my abilities sufficient to warrant. He that condemns himself to compose on a stated day, will often bring to his task an

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attention dissipated, a memory embarrassed, an imagination overwhelmed, a mind distracted with anxieties, a body languishing with disease: he will labour on a barren topick, till it is too late to change it; or, in the ardour of invention, diffuse his thoughts into wild exuberance, which the pressing hour of publication cannot suffer judgment to examine or reduce.

Whatever shall be the final sentence of mankind, I have at least endeavoured to deserve their kindness. I have laboured to refine our language to grammatical purity, and to clear it from colloquial barbarisms, licentious idioms, and irregular combinations. Something, perhaps, I have added to the elegance of its construction, and something to the harmony of its cadence. When common words were less pleasing to the ear, or less distinct in their signification, I have familiarized the terms of philosophy, by applying them to popular ideas, but have rarely admitted any words not authorized by former writers; for I believe that whoever knows the English tongue in its present extent, will be able to express his thoughts without further help from other nations [n].

As it has been my principal design to inculcate wisdom or piety, I have allotted few papers to the idle sports of imagination. Some, perhaps, may be found, of which the highest excellence is harmless merriment; but scarcely any man is so steadily serious as not to complain, that the severity of dictatorial instruction has been too seldom relieved, and that he is driven by the sternness of the Rambler's philosophy to more cheerful and airy companions.

[n] "If an author arises, whose deep learning, and large imagination, struggling for expression equal to his conceptions, tempt him to lengthen his periods and swell his phraseology; if an intimate familiarity with the combinations of a dead language now and then betray him into too wide a deviation from the vernacular idiom; such a writer will have the mortification to see the beauties of his style distorted by awkward imitation, and his errors (if in him they are errors) made ridiculous by aggravation. The language that in his masterhand, like a well-tuned instrument, 'discourses most eloquent music,' under their management utters nothing but discord."—*Colman's Gentleman, No. III. in Colman's Prose on several Occasions, Vol. I.*

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Next to the excursions of fancy are the disquisitions of criticism, which, in my opinion, is only to be ranked among the subordinate and instrumental arts. Arbitrary decision and general exclamation I have carefully avoided, by asserting nothing without a reason, and establishing all my principles of judgment on unalterable and evident truth.

In the pictures of life I have never been so studious of novelty or surprise, as to depart wholly from all resemblance; a fault which writers deservedly celebrated frequently commit, that they may raise, as the occasion requires, either mirth or abhorrence. Some enlargement may be allowed to declamation, and some exaggeration to burlesque; but as they deviate farther from reality, they become less useful, because their lessons will fail of application. The mind of the reader is carried away from the contemplation of his own manners; he finds in himself no likeness to the phantom before him; and though he laughs or rages, is not reformed.

The essays professedly serious, if I have been able to execute my own intentions, will be found exactly conformable to the precepts of Christianity, without any accommodation to the licentiousness and levity of the present age. I therefore look back on this part of my work with pleasure, which no blame or praise of man shall diminish or augment. I shall never envy the honours which wit and learning obtain in any other cause, if I can be numbered among the writers who have given ardour to virtue, and confidence to truth.

Αὐτῶν ἐκ μακάρων ἀντάξιος εἴη ἀμοιβή.
Celestial pow'rs! that piety regard,
From you my labours wait their last reward.

END OF VOL. III.

TALBOYS AND WHEELER.

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